

THE MAGAZINE OF MOTION PICTURE & TELEVISION MUSIC APPRECIATION

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FILM SCORE

M O N T H L Y

**From Rosewood
to Mars Attacks!**
Reviews of All the
Latest CDs

**Recording
Miklós Rozsa**

An Interview with
Michael Fine

Varèse Sarabande
Rescues Fox
Classic Series!
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No More Clowning Around

I rarely read soundtrack reviews on the Internet or in other publications anymore. They're just not that interesting. I'll skim them, read anything about an album I worked on, and occasionally seek out opinions on music I recently heard or wrote about. But usually, they stink.

It's not that the people writing soundtrack reviews have no business writing about film music—what does?—but that they have so little to say. They confuse watered-down orchestral scores with great ones, play favorites of second-string hack composers who happen to score a genre movie (and who may have interesting music in them, just not here), scoff at idioms outside their own (i.e. anything pop or "dated"), and make bold, ridiculous pronouncements ("Look out John Williams, here comes Robert Folk!"). Heaven help us if a composer writes a letter to a fan/reviewer, the surest path to a glowing five-star review. In general, forget about anyone having any musical knowledge (which isn't necessary, but helps), an interest in cinema, or an ability to make the slightest of aesthetic judgments. When left to their own devices, fans are both overly forgiving of music, and intensely cruel towards composers.

I know a lot of people read reviews as consumer reports, to decide which albums to buy. That's cool, and part of the gig. But a lot of people who have 2000 CDs in their collection (a good percentage thereof in the shrink wrap) profess to want film music to be taken seriously. For that to happen, the quality of writing about it has to get a lot better. The usual "criticisms of criticism" are not those I share: that those who cannot do, review, and that we should be lenient towards composers because other people are ruining their efforts. I sure can't write movie music, but after dozens of issues of *FSM* I've gotten pretty experienced at observing how it works. And there should be, always, implicitly, a clear distinction between judging the artistic merits of an end product and assigning blame or credit to the intentions behind it.

It is certainly the smallest of mud puddles in the world to be writing film-score reviews. I don't take it as seriously as it may seem here, but as long as I'm going to do it, I'd like it to be interesting and perceptive. I'm grateful to people over the years who have come up with new ways of evaluating film music, such as Royal Brown and Richard Kraft—the latter without even writing anything. Just in this issue, I'm proud to present more work by two writers who consistently impress and inform me, Jeff Bond and John Bender.

You may despise everything we write, but at least we have ideas. It would be nice if others writing out there could say the same. My advice is, trust your reactions and feel free to disagree with conventional wisdom—don't equivocate. At the same time, learn something about film, music, and film music. Put those two together and say something halfway intelligent. I'll be the first to read it.

-Lukas Kendall



"The proper study of Apes is Apes."
Lukas Kendall and Jeff Bond

photo by Ron Jones

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News & Information

New Books

Lone Eagle will have the Fourth Edition of their *Film Composers Guide* out next month; call 1-800-FILM-BKS to order.

Mike Murray's Disney book, *The Golden Age of Walt Disney Records 1933-1988*, is due from Antique Trader Books in May. It features a comprehensive Disney discography/price guide of LPs, EPs, 45s and 78s—over 3300 recordings in all, with 250 illustrations. The price is \$19.95 plus \$2.50 shipping in the U.S.; call 1-800-334-7165 to order, or write PO Box 1050, Dubuque IA 52004-1050.

Didier Deutsch is editing a soundtrack buyers guide for VideoHound. Publication is tentatively set for October or November. Over 2000 CDs will be reviewed.

Jerry Osborne's long-awaited second edition of *The Official Price Guide to Movie/TV Soundtracks and Original Cast Albums* will be out in May.

Media Watch

The new issue of *Cineaste* magazine (Vol. XXII, No. 4) has an article

by Robert Hershon, "Film Composers in the Sonic Wars." Goldsmith, Horner, Goldenthal and Badalamenti are among the interviewees.

The April 1997 issue of *Guitar Player* was a film music issue, with spotlights on John Barry, Ennio Morricone and Ry Cooder, and many guitar charts for film themes.

"The Reinvention of Miklós Rózsa" is a lengthy article by Steve Vertlieb which recently ran in the Baltimore magazine, *Midnight Marquee* (#52), an overview of the composer's career.

The March 1997 issue of *Current Biography* (Volume 58, Number 3) features an entry on James Horner.

S.T.I.R. is a new, newsletter-styled soundtrack periodical of soundtrack reviews. Write for a copy to P.L. Merritt, 271 Brookview Dr, Rochester NY 14617-4917.

The 4/12 edition of *Entertainment This Week* had a nice segment on the new *Simpsons* album, *Songs in the Key of Springfield*, interviewing actress Yeardley Smith (Lisa Simpson) and composer Alf Clausen.

Elmer Bernstein was a guest on NPR on April 4, his 75th birthday. He mentioned Herrmann and the current state of film music, among other topics.

Readers in Southern Illinois, Missouri and Indiana: listen for an imminent NPR series on "Jazz Soundtracks" hosted by Brian Jones, including an interview with Terence Blanchard.

Award

The English Patient (Gabriel Yared) picked up this year's Best Score BAFTA (English Academy) award.

Obituary

Japanese composer Toshiro Mayuzumi died April 9 of liver cancer. Mayuzumi, a pupil of Akira Ifukube, was best known for his score to John Huston's 1966 *The Bible*, as well as a long-running, weekly program he hosted on Japanese TV titled *The Concert Without Title* (*Daimei no nai Ongakukai*). This was

mostly about concert music, but did feature Masaru Satoh as a guest in recent years. Mayuzumi scored around a dozen films overall, including *The Crucified Woman* (1954), *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs* (1960) and *Tokyo Olympiad* (1965). He was the main composer for Japanese director Shohei Imamura.

Corrections

Last issue in our readers poll, *The English Patient* was mistakenly credited to Zbigniew Preisner instead of Gabriel Yared. They're both cool names, though. • Readers of both FSM and the British magazine *Music from the Movies* might have noticed that we used the same Darth Vader photo on the covers of our respective *Star Wars* issues. As some wise souls speculated, this was a complete coincidence. (How else could something so stupid happen?)

Conferences

The Tenth International Congress on Women in Music will take place May 29-June 1 at California Institute of the Arts; Shirley Walker, Richard Bellis and the SPFM's Jeannie Pool are scheduled to be among the movie-music speakers. Contact the Congress via Jeannie Pool at PO Box 8192, La Crescenta CA 91224-0192; fax: 818-248-8681.

The European Biennial for Film Music 1997 will take place June 7-10 in Bonn, Germany, featuring award presentations, panels, workshops and much more. Web users, go to <http://www.kah-bonn.de>, or write Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Friedrich Ebert-Allee 4, D-53113 Bonn; phone: (+49) 228-917-1200.

Record producer David Schechter hosted a gathering of Monstrous Movie Music fans at Borders Books in Los Angeles on April 9th. He talked about classic '50s monster movie scores; composer Irving Gertz, reconstructionists Kathleen Mayne and John Morgan, and conductors Masatoshi Mitumoto and Bill Stromberg were among the guests.

Recent/Upcoming Releases

RCA Spain has issued the first CD of *M Squad*, the 1959 re-recorded orchestra/jazz television soundtrack, including three tracks by John Williams—but they don't sound like him, you've been warned. Further-

more, the "In Living Stereo" recording is now in living mono.

The Big Picture is the newest Erich Kunzel/Cincinnati Pops compilation, released in April by Telarc.

The French label Play Time is issuing the Ennio Morricone score to *Le Casse (The Burglars)* with extra music, limited to 2000 copies. • *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (Luis Bacalov) is imminent from SLC in Japan.

The New York-based Pendulum Entertainment Group will indeed be reissuing on CD *Cocoon* (James Horner) in June, as well as *Mahogany* (Diana Ross). *Lilies of the Field* (Goldsmith), *Looking for Mr. Goodbar* and *Dune* (Toto) are out now.

Retrograde (FSM's label) is still on track for a summer release of *Deadfall* (1968, John Barry), never before available on CD.

FILM SCORE

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STAFF

Editor Lukas Kendall

Contributors John Bender, Oscar Benjamin, Jeff Bond, Dave Buzan, Ross Care, Tom DeMary, Jack H. Lee, Bill Powell, Jeff Szpirglas, Tony Thomas, Sijbold Tonkens, Paul Tonks, Ray Tuttle, Bill Whitaker.

Design Joe Sikoryak

Quote of the Month

"The legend started simply: just a boy without a home. Taken in by Indians, but still pretty much alone. He had to struggle with strange customs, and his own fears from within. He learned the wisdom of the forest; he learned the ways of the wind."

CONTACT INFO

Mail 5967 Chula Vista Way #7
Los Angeles CA 90068

Phone 213-464-7919

Fax 213-464-5916

e-mail ldkendal@unix.amherst.edu

The Soundtrack Handbook

Is a free six-page listing of mail order dealers, books, societies, etc. It is sent automatically to all subscribers or to anyone upon request.

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Record Label Round-Up

DRG

Due June: 1) *The Ennio Morricone Singles Collection, 1970-1981* (2CD set). 2) *A Luciano Visconti Double Feature* (one CD).

Fifth Continent

Due late 1997 is an expanded *Best Years of Our Lives* (Hugo Friedhofer), remastered in DTS 5.1 Digital Surround. *The Night Digger* (Herrmann) will also be re-released in this format.

GNP/Crescendo

Out this summer is a *Godzilla* compilation (original tracks). Due mid to late summer is *Greatest Sci-Fi Hits Volume 4* (Neil Norman).

Hollywood

Austin Powers (George Clinton) should be out. *Con-Air* (Mark Mancina) and *Gone Fishin'* will be released this summer.

Intrada

May 20: *True Women* (Bruce Broughton). July 15: *A Patch of Blue* (Jerry Goldsmith, 1965). Intrada is a label and mail order outlet, write for free catalog: 1488 Vallejo St., San

20th Century Fox's long-delayed "Classic

Series" of original film soundtracks will shortly be revived on Varèse Sarabande. Varèse has contracted with Fox to release a total of 16 albums over the next three years. The first CDs will be out in August, and will be, pending current negotiations, Jerry Goldsmith's *Planet of the Apes* (complete score for the first time, remixed from the original multitrack elements) coupled with a suite from the composer's 1971 *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* (in stereo); and Bernard Herrmann's 1959 *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (66 min.).

Released in September will be *The Mephisto Waltz/The Other* (Goldsmith, 1971/1972) and *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir* (Herrmann, 1947). Late 1997 or early 1998 will most likely see the release of David Raksin's *Forever Amber* (1947). All of these initial five albums will be in stereo.

Other titles remain undetermined at this point, but readers can assume that

Varèse Sarabande to Release Fox Classic Series

material originally announced for the series in 1994 will eventually be released. There will be several movie-musical albums as well as film-score albums. All CDs will be produced by Nick Redman, who has been with the series since its inception; coordinating the discs for Varèse Sarabande will be Bruce Kimmel.

Two titles announced at one time which unfortunately will not be released are *Predator* (Alan Silvestri) and *Die Hard* (Michael Kamen). To facilitate albums of these union-recorded scores, Fox has entered into a special arrangement with the American Federation of Musicians, to reduce the large re-use payments required to release the music. However, the deal only covers scores recorded before 25 years ago. Fair game for 1997 release, therefore, is any score recorded in 1972 or before; in 1998, 1973 scores will become available as well, and so on.

The Fox Classic Series was begun in 1993, overseen by Redman. Six titles were released that November on Arista, distributed through BMG: *Laura/Jane Eyre* (Raksin/Herrmann), *Stormy Weather* (musical), *How Green Was My Valley* (Alfred Newman), *Star!* (musical), *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (Herrmann) and *The Robe* (Newman). These titles are still in print on Arista and will remain so until at least 1999; the same holds true for the 4CD *Star Wars Trilogy* box set, also released by Arista in November 1993.

Sales were respectable for the first batch of Classic Series titles, and a second set of albums was prepared by Redman off and on the following year. However, relations between Fox, Arista and the musicians union never jelled to the point where they could be released. The series has been in limbo until this new agreement signed by Fox and Varèse Sarabande. -LK

UPCOMING MOVIES

LALO SCHIFRIN has revisited his classic, *Enter the Dragon*-style of '70s action music on *Money Talks*, a New Line action-comedy starring Charlie Sheen and Chris Tucker, directed by Brett Ratner. The film will be released on July 18th. Currently, only a song album (on Arista) is planned, which may or may not have one Schifrin cut.

DAVID ARNOLD: *Tomorrow Never Dies* (James Bond 18), *Godzilla* (Sony, Emmerich/Devlin), *A Life Less Ordinary* (d. Danny Boyle).

LUIS BACALOV: *Polish Wedding, B. Monkey.*

JOHN BARRY: *The Horse Whisperer, Amy Foster.*

MARCO BELTRAMI: *Mimic.*

DAVID BERGEAUD: *Prince Valiant* (Paramount).

ELMER BERNSTEIN: *Buddy* (d. Thompson), *Hoodlum* (gangsters).

SIMON BOSWELL: *Photographing Fairies, American Perfekt.*

BRUCE BROUGHTON: *Fantasia Continues* (transitions), *Simple Wish, Krippendorf's Tribe* (Disney).

PAUL BUCKMASTER: *Most Wanted* (New Line).

CARTER BURWELL: *Big Lebowski* (Coen Bros.), *Picture Perfect, Conspiracy Theory* (Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts).

ERIC CLAPTON: *The Van* (co-composed with Richard Hartley).

STANLEY CLARKE: *Sprung.*

GEORGE CLINTON: *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery, The Last Days of Frankie the Fly* (Dennis Hopper), *Mortal Kombat 2.*

STEWART COPELAND: *Four Days in September* (d. Bertolucci), *Little Boy Blue, Big Red.*

MYCHAELE DANNA: *Ice Storm.*

PATRICK DOYLE: *Great Expectations* (d. Cuarón).

ANNE DUDLEY: *The Full Monty.*

RANDY EDELMAN: *Gone Fishin'* (Joe Pesci comedy).

CLIFF EIDELMAN: *Free Willy 3.*

DANNY ELFMAN: *Men in Black.*

STEPHEN ENDLEMEN: *Kicked in the Head, Shakespeare's Sister.*

ROBERT FOLK: *Nothing to Lose* (Tim Robbins, Martin Lawrence).

BRUCE FOWLER: *Mousehunt* (Dreamworks).

JOHN FRIZZELL: *Alien: Resurrection.*

PHILIP GLASS: *Bent.*

NICK GLENNIE-SMITH: *Home Alone 3, Fire Down Below* (Seagal).

ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL: *Batman and Robin, Butcher Boy* (d. Jordan).

JERRY GOLDSMITH: *L.A. Confidential* (d. Curtis Hanson), *Deep Rising, Bookworm* (Fox), *Lost in Space* (d. Stephen Hopkins).

JOEL GOLDSMITH: *King Kull* (aka *Kull the Conqueror*).

JAMES NEWTON HOWARD: *My Best Friend's Wedding* (Julia Roberts), *Father's Day, The Postman* (Kevin Costner).

JAMES HORNER: *Titanic* (d. James Cameron).

SØREN HYLDGAARD: *Island of Darkness* (horror/thriller, Denmark-Norway), *Skyggen* (*The Shadow*, futuristic action thriller, Denmark), *Hydrophobia* (action-adventure, d. Peter Flinth).

MARK ISHAM: *Night Falls on Manhattan* (d. Sidney Lumet), *Afterglow* (Nick Nolte, Julie Christie), *Face Off* (d. John Woo).

MAURICE JARRE: *Le Jour et la Nuit.*

TREVOR JONES: *In Pursuit of Honor* (d. Ridley Scott, Demi Moore), *Long Dogs, Desperate Measures, Dark City* (d. Alex Proyas).

JOHN LURIE: *Excess Baggage* (Alicia Silverstone).

MARK MANCINA: *Speed 2, Con-Air* (co-composed with Trevor Rabin).

DENNIS McCARTHY: *Letters from a Killer* (d. David Carson).

JOEL McNEELY: *Virus.*

ALAN MENKEN: *Hercules* (animated).

ENNIO MORRICONE: *Lolita* (d. Adrian Lyne), *U-Turn* (d. Oliver Stone).

MARK MOTHERSBAUGH: *Independence.*

DAVID NEWMAN: *Out to Sea* (Matthau/Lemmon), *Quest for Camelot.*

RANDY NEWMAN: *Air Force One* (Harrison Ford).

THOMAS NEWMAN: *Mad City.*

MICHAEL NYMAN: *Gattaca* (sci-fi future film).

JOHN OTTMAN: *Incognito* (d. Badham), *The Apt Pupil* (d. Singer).

BASIL POLEDOURIS: *Going West in America* (action, d. Jeb Stuart), *Starship Troopers* (d. Paul Verhoeven), *Breakdown* (Kurt Russell).

RACHEL PORTMAN: *Addicted to Love, Home Fries.*

GRAEME REVELL: *Spawn* (film).

J. PETER ROBINSON: *Firestorm* (Fox).

MARK RUBIN AND BAD LIVERS: *The Newton Boys* (d. Linklater, Fox).

JOHN SCOTT: *The Scarlet Tunic* (follow-up story to *Jungle Book*).

MARC SHAIMAN: *In and Out, George of the Jungle.*

HOWARD SHORE: *The Game* (d. David Fincher).

ALAN SILVESTRI: *Contact* (d. Zemeckis), *Tarzan* (animated, Disney).

FREDERIC TALGORN: *Story of Monty Spinnaker* (German, fantasy).

MICHAEL TAVERA: *Mr. Magoo, Rocket Man* (Disney).

WENDY & LISA: *Soul Food.*

SHIRLEY WALKER: *Spawn* (first HBO animated series).

MERVYN WARREN: *Steel, The Kiss* (Queen Latifah).

JOHN WILLIAMS: *The Lost World* (d. Steven Spielberg), *Seven Years in Tibet* (Brad Pitt), *Amistad* (Spielberg).

PETER WOLF: *The Fearless Four* (German, animated).

CHRISTOPHER YOUNG: *Kilronan* (thriller), *Watch That Man* (Bill Murray spy spoof), *The Flood.*

HANS ZIMMER: *Prince of Egypt* (animated musical), *The Peacemaker.*

Marco Polo

Due in June at the earliest is Bernard Herrmann: *Garden of Evil*, *Prince of Players*; and Hugo Friedhofer: *The Rains of Ranchipur*, *Seven Cities of Gold*, *The Lodger*, *The Adventures of Marco Polo*. Due November are *King Kong* (Max Steiner, complete score) and a *Marco Polo* sampler. Recorded but unscheduled: Alfred Newman: *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Beau Geste*, *All About Eve*; Philip Saiton: *Moby Dick*; and Victor Young: *The Uninvited*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Bright Leaf*, *The Greatest Show on Earth*. All are conducted by Bill Stromberg, and reconstructed/restored by John Morgan.

MCA

Due May 27 is *The Lost World* (John Williams).

Milan

Due May 20 is *Passions and Achievements*, a compilation of music from Ron Howard films. A Rainer Werner Fassbinder collection is due June 3. Due July 29 is *Bandwagon* (various artists).

Nonesuch

Now scheduled for July are four new film music albums recently recorded in London: 1) Leonard Rosenman: *East of Eden* and *Rebel Without a Cause* (London Sinfonietta/John Adams, cond.). 2) Toru Takemitsu: music from *Rikyu*, *Women of the Dunes* and other films. 3) Georges Delerue: Music from

Truffaut Films, including *Jules et Jim*, *Shoot the Piano Player*, *Day for Night*, *Two English Girls*, and others (London Sinfonietta/Hugh Wolff, cond.). 4) Alex North: music from *Spartacus*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Bad Seed* and other films (London Symphony Orchestra/Eric Stern, cond.). More albums are on the slate for later this year.

Play It Again

Due late summer is the book by Geoff Leonard and Pete Walker, *The Music of John Barry*. *Play It Again* is going ahead with a fourth volume of British TV themes for release later this year. See their web site at <http://www.auracle.com/pia>.

RCA Italy/Legend

Upcoming from these Italian labels are *The Damned* (Maurice Jarre, complete score), *The Horror Wax Museum* (new Dario Argento film, Maurizio Abeni, symphonic), *A Season in Hell* (Maurice Jarre, 30 min. new music), *Four Sci-Fi Film Scores* (A.F. Lavagnino), *Spasmo/Cosa Avete Fatto a Solange?* (Ennio Morricone), *Per le Antiche Scale/Il Maestro e Margherita* (Morricone), *Prima Della Rivoluzione/Un Uomo a Meta'* (Morricone).

Rhino

Forthcoming are mostly compilations: Due May 27: *George & Ira Gershwin: The Gershwin's in Hollywood, Romantic Duets* at M-G-M. Due June

24: *Murder Is My Beat: Classic Film Noir Themes & Scenes*, Fred Astaire at M-G-M (2CD set), *Now You Has Jazz: Louis Armstrong at M-G-M*, *Gone with the Wind* (single-CD configuration of original soundtrack). Due July 8: *Dramatic Scores* (previously released Turner tracks). Due July 22: *Lolita* (1962 Kubrick film, Robert Harris/Nelson Riddle), *Zabriskie Point* (2CD set, 1970 film, various).

Silva Screen

Due May 20 is a newly recorded 2CD compilation, *Warriors of the Silver Screen* (disc one has CD-enhanced features). Due in late June in England is a new recording (Kenneth Alwyn/Orchestra of the Royal Ballet) of music from Ealing Studios British films of the '30s, '40s and '50s.

Sony Classical

Titanic (James Horner) will be out June 17. • Now scheduled for July is *Cinema Serenade*, a John Williams-conducted compilation of film themes adapted for violin (Itzhak Perlman, soloist; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra).

SouthEast

Due in a month or two from this Dutch label is *Within the Rock* (Rod Gammons, Tony Fennel, enhanced-CD), a classically oriented score for a horror/sci-fi film. *Fear No Evil* (Frank LaLoggia) will be out as an enhanced-CD later this year.

CONCERTS

Alabama: May 23

Montgomery s.o.; French Medley (various), *Out of Africa* (Barry).

California: May 30, 31

Pacific Sym., Santa Ana; *English Patient* (Yared), *Sunset Boulevard* (Waxman), *Happy Trails* (Evans).

Idaho: July 25, 26, August 3

Summer Fest, Boise; *The Furies* (Waxman).

Louisiana: May 15

Shreveport s.o.; *Gone with the Wind*, *Dances with Wolves* (Barry).

Maine: July 2, 3, 4, 5

Portland s.o.; *Sunrise at Campobello* (Waxman), "Moon River" (Mancini).

Maryland: May 16, 17, 18

Baltimore s.o.; *Around the World in 80 Days* (Young).

Michigan: June 6, 8, July 3, 4, 5, 6

Detroit Sym.; *Independence Day*.

New York: May 16, 18

Fredonia s.o.; *Around the World in 80 Days* (V. Young).

North Carolina: June 21

North Carolina s.o., Raleigh; *The Furies* (Waxman).

Pennsylvania: May 29, 30, 31, June 1

Pittsburgh s.o.; *Jezebel* (Steiner),

Psycho (Herrmann), *Laura* (Raksin).

Wisconsin: July 30

Wisconsin Chamber Orch., Madison; *Murder on the Orient Express* (Bennett).

England: July 11, 12

Royal Liverpool Phil.; *The Magnificent Seven* (Bernstein), *High Noon* (Tiomkin).

Japan: August 3

Kansai Phil. Orch. in Osaka; *Mission: Impossible* (Schifrin), *Shane* (V. Young), *Great Escape* (Bernstein), *Romeo and Juliet* (Rota), *Love Story* (Lai), *Lawrence of Arabia* (Jarre), *Star Trek: First Contact* (Goldsmith), *French Medley* (various).

Scotland: June 19

Royal Scottish N. Or.; Carl Davis, cond.; *Madame Bovary* (Rózsa), *La Strada* (Rota), *Rebecca* (Waxman).

June 28

Royal Scottish Nat. Orch.; *Braveheart* (Horner).

Japan: June 15

Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space; *Mission: Impossible* (Schifrin), *Rambo*, *Basic Instinct* (Goldsmith), *Independence Day* (Arnold).

August 3

Sym. Hall, Osaka; *Star Trek: First Contact* (Goldsmith), *The Great*

Escape (Bernstein), *Shane* (V. Young), *Mission: Impossible* (Schifrin), *Romeo and Juliet* (Rota), *Love Story* (Lai), *Lawrence of Arabia* (Jarre), *French Medley* (various).

John Williams Concerts

John Williams will conduct the Boston Pops in a film music concert in Boston on May 24, playing his own music as well as *Cinema Paradiso* (Morricone; Itzhak Perlman, soloist), *Lawrence of Arabia* (Jarre), and *A Place in the Sun* (Waxman; Grover Washington, Jr., soloist). The concert will be taped and broadcast on *Evening at Pops* (PBS).

Williams will conduct the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra in a 20th anniversary *Star Wars* concert on August 29 and 30. The Hollywood Bowl's annual large film music concert will take place on Sept. 20 (John Mauceri/Hollywood Bowl Orch), with a theme of all-20th Century Fox material: "Fox Night at the Bowl."

Boston Pops in Japan

Keith Lockhart will lead the Boston Pops on a tour of Japan this summer, playing such film pieces as *ID4*, *Alien*, *Star Trek: First Contact*, and

the *Star Trek* TV theme. There will be 16 concerts; the first is at the International Forum in Tokyo on June 7.

English Film Music Concerts

Stanley Black will play piano and conduct two film music concerts in England: one on June 28 at Tilbury Fort, Essex (with fireworks; *Casa blanca*, *Limelight*, *Thunderbirds*, *Star Wars*, more); and one on July 12 at Kenwood Lakeside ("On Stage and in the Movies," BBC Concert Orchestra, *Stagecoach*, *The Cowboys*, *The Sea Hawk*, *The Sting*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, more). Call Ticketmaster, 0171-413-1443.

Due to the lead time of this magazine, it is possible some of this information is too late to do any good. Please accept my sincere apologies.

This is a list of concerts with film music pieces. Contact the orchestra's box office for more information. Thanks go to John Waxman of Themes & Variations (<http://tnv.net>) for this list; he provides scores and parts to the orchestras.

For a list of silent film music concerts, see Tom Murray's web site: <http://www.cinemaweb.com/lcc>.

Super Tracks

Forthcoming are *First Kid* (Richard Gibbs) and *The Invasion* (Don Davis, NBC TV mini-series, electronic).

Varèse Sarabande

Volcano (Alan Silvestri) should be out. Due May 13 were *Donnie Brasco* (score, Patrick Doyle), *Bliss* (Jan A.P. Kaczmarek), and *Eight Heads in a Duffel Bag* (Andrew Gross). Due June 10: *Batman: Symphony for a Dark Knight* (Joel McNeely, cond.), a new recording featuring music from the first three *Batman* features as well as the '60s TV theme.

Varèse has two upcoming series of albums. The first is the long-awaited Classic Series of original soundtracks from 20th Century Fox films; see sidebar, p. 5. The second is the ambitious series of new recordings undertaken by producer Robert Townsend mostly with the Royal Scottish Na-

tional Orchestra: *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Elmer Bernstein, composer/conductor), *Patton/Tora, Tora, Tora* (Jerry Goldsmith, composer/conductor), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Alex North, cond. Jerry Goldsmith, National Philharmonic at Abbey Road), *Psycho* (Bernard Herrmann, cond. Joel McNeely), *The Sand Pebbles* (Goldsmith), *Torn Curtain* (Herrmann, cond. McNeely), *The Magnificent Seven* (Bernstein), *The Great Escape* (Bernstein), and an album of '70s disaster scores (*The Towering Inferno*, *The Poseidon Adventure*, *The Swarm*).

At last report, *Mockingbird* and *Patton* were scheduled for June release, and *Psycho* and *Virginia Woolf* were set for July; however, this will most likely change. Therefore, you must keep reading *Film Score Monthly* to find out when everything cool will come out. •

READER ADS

FEES INFO: Free: Up to five items. After five items, it's \$5 for an ad with up to 10 items; \$10 for an ad with up to 20 items; \$20 for up to 30 items; and add \$10 for each additional (up to) 10 more items. Send U.S. funds only to Film Score Monthly, 5967 Chula Vista Way #7, Los Angeles CA 90068. No bootleg titles in ads, please. You can send your ad or inquiry by e-mail: ldkendal@unix.amherst.edu.

WANTED

Scott Hutchins (1504 E 83rd St, Indianapolis IN 46240-2372; sahutchi@cord.iupui.edu) wants to acquire a CD of the score to *Aysedik ve Şirhili Cüceler Rüyalar Ülkesinde* (Aysedik and the Bewitched Dwarfs in Dreamland), a 1971 Turkish film of *The Wizard of Oz* directed by Tunç Basaran, music composed by Torgut Ören. Was probably only released only in Turkey, if at all; will pay a rather large amount of money for it on CD.

Bill Powell (2007 Gerda Terrace, Orlando FL 32804-5443) is looking for the following CDs: *Jane Eyre* (John Williams), *Tales of Beatrix Potter* (John Lanchbery), *The Reivers* (Williams, Masters Film Music), *The Wild Bunch* (Jerry Fielding, Screen Archives), and *Jerry Fielding Film Music* (Bay Cities 2CD set). Will pay top dollar for mint-condition CDs.

Scott Somerndike (649 S Barrington Ave #105, Los Angeles CA 90049; ph/fax: 310-472-5527) is looking for *Return of the Jedi*, original Polydor cassette.

Paul Tonks (21 Lyndhurst Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 6FA, England; ptonx@mistrail.co.uk) wants the following CDs; advise asking price: *Cobb*, *Une Femme Francaise*, *Cable Guy* (promo), *Radio Island Murders*.

Carl Young (PO Box 8604, South Lake Tahoe CA 96158; ph: 916-544-7146) wants the CD *The Film Music of Franz Waxman* (The Film Composers Series, Volume III, RCA 2283-2-R).

FOR SALE / TRADE

"Collection" (PO Box 2224, Jena LA 71342) is selling off a 30+ year LP and CD movie music soundtrack collection. Retailers

and large collectors welcome. Write for more information.

Dave Easterla (7919 Pebble Beach Dr #102, Citrus Heights CA 95610) has for sale the following items: *Gone with the Wind* double picture CD, \$175. *Connie Francis—Let's Sing with Connie Francis* (MGM) MM-1011, Japan, vinyl, with obi strip and DJ sheets, \$295. *Star Wars—The Story of...*, vinyl picture disk, \$55, SS \$65. *Doctor Who*, BBC vinyl picture disk \$95. *James Dean—Rare Broadcast Recordings with Natalie Cole*, vinyl picture disk \$95. *Flintstones—OST* vinyl picture disk, \$45. Over 500 different picture disks for sale/trade.

Paul MacLean (309 The Parkway, Ithaca NY 14850; ph: 607-257-2047; skye@clarifyconnect.com) has for auction (with starting bids): CDs: *The Deceivers* (Scott, cut-out, artwork slightly wrinkled, \$20), *Raggedy Man* (Goldsmith, Varèse Club, \$120), *A Summer Story* (Delerue, \$25), *Moon Over Parador* (Jarre, \$25), *Private Lives of Elizabeth & Essex* (Korngold, Bay Cities, \$20). LPs (and condition, A-F): *Under Fire* (Goldsmith, B+, cut-out \$10), *Mountbatten* (John Scott, sealed \$20), *A Man for All Seasons* (Delerue & dialogue, A, 2LP set, played once \$20), *Black Hole* (Barry, C+ \$10). Closes midnight June 15th.

Nat Modica (113 Otis St, Chula Vista CA 91910; ph: 619-426-4050) is disposing of a 40-year soundtrack LP collection. Send or call with wants.

Brad Taylor (360 N Bedford Drive #215, Beverly Hills CA 90210; ph: 310-247-9955; fax: 310-556-8921) has the following CDs for trade: (1) *The Winds of War* (Cobert), (2) *Dominick and Eugene* (Jones), (3) *Revenge* (Nitzsche), (4) *The Running Man* (Faltermeyer), and (5) *The Wild Duck* (Walker)/*Frog Dreaming* (May).

Ross Woodbury (PO Box 1387, Nevada City CA 95959; ph: 916-265-3622) has the following LPs in excellent condition for sale: (1) *Fantastic Planet* (*Le Planète Sauvage*, French import) \$30; (2) *Outer Space Suite* (rare Bernard Herrmann radio cues) \$30; (3) *Torn Curtain* (Bernard Herrmann's unused score) \$20; (4) *Once Upon a Time in America* (hard-to-find Ennio Morricone) \$20; (5) *Themes from Classic Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films* (rare Varèse Sarabande collection) \$20. Toss in a few bucks for shipping.

FOR SALE / TRADE & WANTED

Michael Lim (1255 University Ave #327, Sacramento CA 95825) has for sale the following items: LPs: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (score, sealed), *In the Mood, Midnight Run*. Cassettes: *The Bear, The Deceivers, Defending Your Life, Farewell to the King, 5 Corners, Moon Over Parador, Red Heat*, etc. Send offers; all inquiries welcome. Also, some CDs for sale: scores from all eras, a few casts, a few foreign—most CDs \$3-\$9, cassettes \$1-\$2. Write for free list (SASE please). Wanted: Looking for people (new collectors & anybody else) for possible straight trades of more common or unusual items that the other doesn't already have.

Myron Peters (1505 Suburban Drive, Sioux Falls SD 57110-3764; ph: 605-334-3872 only between 5-9PM CDT) has the following CDs for trade only: *Cocoon* (Polydor, Horner), *The Witches of Eastwick* (Warner Bros., Williams), Christopher Young 5CD promo set (*Tales from the Hood, Species, Virtuosity, Unforgettable, Head Above Water*), will trade as a set only. Wanted on CD: *Bad Dreams* (Ferguson), *The Blob* (Hoenig), *Cherry 2000* (Poledouris), *Octopussy* (A&M Records, Barry), Cliff Eidelman promo.

Uwe Sperlich (Kloster-Seeon-Str.5, 81476 Munich, Germany; Uwe_S@compuserve.com) has CDs for trade only: *Under the*

Display ads are also available. Please write for complete rates, deadlines and information.

Volcano (North, Masters Film Music SRS 2011), *The Burbs* (Goldsmith, Varèse Club VCL 9102.10), *Moon Over Parador* (Jarre, MCA-6249), *Arachnophobia* (Jones, Hollywood 467991 2, German issue), *Farewell to the King* (Poledouris, Milan CD CH 375). Wanted: *Hocus Pocus* (John Debney, Promo), *Last Embrace/Eye of the Needle* (Miklós Rózsa, Varèse VCL 9101.9), *Knights of the Round Table* (Miklós Rózsa, Varèse; VCD 47269), *Boys from Brazil* (Jerry Goldsmith, Masters Film Music SRS 2001 or Japanese reissue), *Suites and Themes* (Jerry Goldsmith, Masters Film Music SRS 2003).

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MAIL BAG

Letters from Readers

1941—Take 2

Just an opening word to mention that I buy your publication at Tower Records in Toronto, that I have done so for more than two years and that I enjoy every part of it, but none more so than your own contributions. A recent example is your review of *Mars Attacks!* (soundtrack and movie) which still has me reeling with the delightful convulsions of recognition of a kindred wit in such a disparate age, and this despite the age difference between writer and reader (I am 47).

In "Laserphile" (#76), Andy Dursin rejoices in the laserdisc release of a restored 1941 and its isolated John Williams score. It is surprising to find there is indeed an interesting score under the continuous barrage of the effects tracks. It is less surprising to discover that it is totally unrelated to the movie, whose theme seems to be, as far as can be inferred from the Beavis and Butt-Head team who scripted it, yoked with the do-good, feel-good antecedents of Steven Spielberg: "War, idiocy and mayhem are good clean innocent fun in and of themselves but are also a powerful sexual stimulant and sufficient justification for rape and other adolescent fantasies."

This is a movie whose aim is so low, its only effective metaphor is a scene where Christopher Lee, as a Nazi admiral, and Toshiro Mifune, as a Japanese submarine captain, try to coax Slim Pickens to defecate so they can retrieve a toy compass from his excrement. Looking for some sense of direction in all the ambient caca, gentlemen? This is a movie where the viewer stops counting the occurrences of the word "shit" around number 76 in the first six reels but keeps mouthing it all through the rest of its epic running time. This is a movie delighting in the filth and imbecility of its racist and sexist premises. This is yet another American comedy about motorized vehicles, back-seats, body fluids, body parts and fire-power. This is one misguided, unredeemable, smelly flop serving, to this day, as a convenient marker (1979) between the self-indulgence of the '70s and the gross excess of the '80s. The fact that it has been "mickey-moused" by John Williams is just another one of its grandiose empty gestures, on a par with this self-serving, bloated "reissue": Mr. Williams (despite his jazz past and *The Reivers*) seems once again incap-

pable of producing anything other than generic Elgarian heroics that are mercifully (and mercilessly) lost in the general clang of the ensemble and end up as one more fuming coat of silt on the resulting compost. The only times the score comes into its own (so to speak) are the USO dance spectacular (a servile paraphrase of '40s big-band musicals) and the end-titles march, whose musical style are firmly rooted in Albert Hall and not anywhere near American soil.

Watching and listening to this letterboxed laserdisc laxative brought back to mind two fond memories. First, sitting at a screening of *Hook* (another Spielberg-Williams comedic "collaboration") where a crying four-year-old, holding his ears, pleaded to his father: "Daddy, Daddy, can you make the music stop?" And, in total contrast, the spine-tingling sense of wrap-around euphoria overpowering the viewer-listener at a Cinerama screening of *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* (another comedy of excess) whenever Ernest Gold's variations on the carousel waltz theme indicate its willingness to bring the story's loose threads together for one more glorious moment of thrilling, unrestrained fun. Despite not being entirely successful, *Mad World* had a serviceably classic theme ("Greed is its own comeuppance") and a score which, despite owing at least as much to Chabrier as to Irving Berlin, managed to convey a sense of earthy, folksy American-ness, humor and wit that invariably escapes Mr. Williams in his comedy excursions.

Benoit A. Racine
550 Jarvis Street, Apt 907
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1N6
Canada

Well. Them's fighting words. Not with me, of course, but with the John Williams Anti-Defamation League who are surely reading *I'm not a big fan of the scores to 1941 or Hook, but it's funny how, between Elmer Bernstein's early '80s comedy outings, Danny Elfman's Back to School, James Newton Howard's Dave, and Williams's Home Alone, we know exactly what a contemporary comedy score is going to sound like.* Witness Liar Liar.

FSM NEEDS YOUR LETTERS!
Respond to a topic here, start your own—anything you want.

Mail Bag
c/o Film Score Monthly
5967 Chula Vista Way #7
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We Hurt the Ones We Love

...*Star Trek: First Contact* ought to be called *Star Trek: First Knight*, because that is what the theme sounded like. A decent score, but you could tell Goldsmith was tired. You know it's bad when he has his son come in and ghost 20 minutes. We all know what Goldsmith could have done, what the Goldsmith of the '70s or '80s would have done... can't you hear that *Omen*-esque Borg theme? Maybe Goldsmith is getting tired and needs to spread his workload out a little more. His recent efforts have really shown this. Hell, if he could whip out the kind of music for dreck like *Star Trek V*, this movie really should have had something going for it. He is still one of the greatest, but he is only human. All good artists need to take a sabbatical and get rest. It keeps them fresh. I would rather see him rest and have him belt out one or two really amazing scores in a year, than see him overwork and do a dozen or so.

I realize he has always been the workaholic, but I think someone needs to face reality now. With all due respect, he's no spring chicken anymore. Same goes for some of the other composers. You don't see the great John Williams going at a crazy pace like that. He does maybe three pictures at the most within a year. Not that his way is the best way, but my point is clear. How can someone be creative when they are trying to beat a schedule on two to three pictures at once?

Let's look at the current state of affairs in general: Goldsmith has been doing Goldsmith Lite since the early '90s. Williams, even? Yes he still puts out quality, but are *Sleepers*, *Nixon* and *Sabrina* anything monumental? Danny Elfman is among the precious few that writes good, original music. He is one of the few I am counting on to maybe turn things around. John Barry and David Arnold are others. Their attitudes tell me a lot about the kind of music they will compose. Barry said it right in his interview (#75), "Just sit down and write good music."

I hope people stand up and take notice to the huge response the *Star Wars* films have had yet again. We are starving for more good stuff like this! I look back on the movies and scores of the late '70s to mid '80s and I can tell you, after about

1985 or so, the decline has been steady. I would love to see if Goldsmith still has it in him to write a monumental piece of work like *The Secret of NIMH* or *Legend*.

My hat is off to Goldsmith and the others for what they can do given their current working circumstances. I challenge even Williams, though. Start a new renaissance. Write another *E.T., Star Wars*



Trilogy, *Indy Trilogy*. If these people have such a great gift as I understand it, that gift can't "die." Let's see it!

I state here and now an open challenge. To all filmmakers and composers: Make art! Quality art! Society needs it!

Eric Wemmer
12100 SW 69 Place
Miami FL 33156
dragon7@icancet.net

*It is because of letters like these that composers hate Film Score Monthly. On a purely factual basis, Joel Goldsmith did not "ghost-write" any of the *First Contact* score, since he's clearly credited in the film.*

...I fully agree with your comments about the new, decaffeinated Jerry Goldsmith (#76). What is it that happens to people? There's an H.P. Lovecraft story in which he talks about how, as we mature and grow old, we become "wise and unhappy, dulled and prosaic with the poison of life." Is that what has happened to Jerry Goldsmith? Or is it us, the aficionados, who are growing wiser and unhappier, duller and more prosaic? We get to a stage where it's difficult to accept a change, and anything that differs radically from what amazed us when we first became interested in the wonderful world of film music has no place in our hardened hearts.

But the question is, was the Goldsmith of the good old days "better"? (Let's not be difficult—we know what "better" means. It means, well... better.) I believe he was. It would be interesting to hear of a teenager who is now a 100% Goldsmith fan, whose devotion has been sparked principally by being exposed to the composer's output from this present decade. If such a fan does exist, what is his/her opinion of *Planet of the Apes*? (I say *Planet of the Apes*, but more or less any other title from before the late '70s would do.)

All this doesn't just apply to Jerry Goldsmith, of course. There are many composers who, if not in qualitative decline, certainly aren't getting any better.

On another topic altogether, I enjoyed *Ransom*, and thought that the score was good too. I rarely feel offended or angered by the messages inherent in some films. I even liked *Rambo 2*, and I consider myself a pacifist! However, *Sleepers* made me want to puke. And I believe that John Williams, in the final scene, glorified the triumph of common sense (I'm being ironic) in much the same way as James Horner did in *Ransom*. But, I don't really mind. Horner and Williams are (still), for me, two of the best in the business, and I'd rather get uplifted by them than driven to suicide by Howard Shore.

Graham Watt
c/ Doctor Rafael Vega
18 - 20 D
27002 Lugo
Spain

I think Goldsmith has curiously moved closer to John Barry's direct, accessible approach in the '90s, with a pianistic sound. Many of his contemporary scores sound like orchestrated piano music—possibly a product of his having to mock-up his music on synths. Danny Elfman, meanwhile, is today doing what Goldsmith used to do—write busy, orchestrally conceived and textural scores where the main idea, if any, is constantly moving amongst different registers and instruments.

...It's now been almost five years since I signed up to FSM and I've stuck with you through thick and thin. I can only say, it's been excellent—what a shame it hasn't always been backed up by the music! There's been a lot of great stuff, to be sure, but certainly not as good as we had it even in the 1980s. You do have a point in mentioning Jerry Fielding in FSM more times than Columbo does Mrs. Columbo, and, having gotten myself acquainted with his stuff recently, I must admit to feeling disappointed that he passed away so soon. Take for example the scene in

The Outfit, where Robert Duvall breaks up (in nicely violent fashion) Mob capo Timothy Carey's card game, underpinned by a powerful cue scored for cymbalom and jazzy percussion. The electricity it creates could power a city for years! [Now there's the best John Bender line that John Bender never wrote. -LK]

The same goes for Georges Delerue. Every work I've heard by him I've enjoyed, be it *Silkwood*, *Biloxi Blues* or *A Little Romance*. The passing of men like him and Fielding grows more acute with the arrival of yes-men like John Debney, who pander to the temp track, in comparison to Delerue and Fielding, both of whom possessed considerable strength of character and would not have acquiesced easily to three-week deadlines and temp tracks. We are living in an age of gutlessness and no longer have people like the above to speak up for their ideas and thus take film music forward.

I must say, it's not all bad. It's nice to see, for example, the rise of Elliot Goldenthal and Basil Poledouris, the latter I consider to be the heir to Delerue's crown as the king of the "people movie." (Basil fans, while I like *The Hunt for Red October* and *Under Siege 2*, what gets me going is *Lonesome Dove* and *Farewell to the King*.) Imagine having him on *Sommersby* or any other movie of that sort. In those kinds of films, he is exceptional.

You seem to have a problem with popular movies and Mel Gibson. I dug *The Rock* and *Independence Day*, the former being an excellent action movie, while the latter is the best comedy film to come out of America since *Stir Crazy*. *Mars Attacks!* will never be as funny! It's a classic comedy in the tradition of Emmerich and Devlin's *StarGate* and *Universal Soldier*—they don't make enough of them! As for Mel Gibson, I greatly enjoyed *Man Without a Face*, *Braveheart* and yes, *Ransom*, and it's clear to me that you have a problem seeing his presence on the screen. That is certainly your prerogative, but since he engenders such strong feelings of unpleasantness in you, how about just staying away from his movies?

Jamie McLean
12 Meek Place
Cambuslang, Glasgow G72 8LN
Scotland

I like *Mad Max* and *The Road Warrior*. I don't have any vendetta against this actor; I've just severely disliked his last two movies, *Braveheart* and *Ransom*.

You know, there are composers today who stick up for what they believe. We don't hear about them because they don't get work.

FSM Directions

...I'll go along with the recent subscription increase since you say it will expand the number of pages. If so, please give us more reviews, not more interviews. In any case, many of those need to be tightened up. Some stretch beyond useful and/or interesting information and degenerate into rambling, tedious twaddle with a few pretty inane questions.

I subscribe to FSM for its reviews. From these I determine whether or not it's likely I'd enjoy the soundtrack. I wish I'd read the reviews before I bought *The Truth and the Light: Music of the X-Files*. Then I'd not have wasted my money on that mess.

I see few of the movies from which the soundtracks are taken, so could care less how well or not they fit the film. But I understand this is an important factor for reviewers to consider (i.e. I dislike and never see westerns yet some of their soundtracks are among my favorites).

Please limit reviews to one pro and one con. That's enough for most of us to make a decision. When you run 4-5 of the same CD in a couple of issues, they turn into space-fillers or vanity press releases for the contributor and a bore to the readers.

In selecting reviews for publication pick ones that describe the kind of music on the CD such as "sweepingly melodic," "high energy jazz band arrangements," "broad, heroic orchestral fanfares (I love fanfares!) and percussions," etc. Especially note if the score is based on any amount of classical music rip-offs. Either I already have the original or don't want it. I'm not interested in wasting money on a soundtrack padded out with public-domain classics that come with already built-in emotion triggers.

Spare us the pedantic pomposities such as "This is the sound of would-be fashion models strutting in St. Tropez and would-be race drivers checking them out." As a musical description this is total gibberish. The only sounds that come to mind after reading this are those of clicking high heels and heavy breathing.

Also spare us the value judgments such as the greatest, the worst, the finest, poorest, etc., usually accompanied by the assertion that anyone who disagrees is a know-nothing or worse.

I've been listening to music for over 55 years and have sampled virtually every type of music ever recorded. Some I loved, many I rejected, but I've heard them. I definitely know what I enjoy listening to, be it Vangelis or Verdi, Barry or Borodin, Tesh or Taneyer, Poledouris or Poulenc, Mancina or Mancini. No amount of name-calling, implied or oth-

erwise, by some top-lofty twit is going to change my tastes at this point.

I'm looking forward to your new layout with the hope it includes more reviews.

Bert Zwonechek
PO Box 651
Sun City CA 92586

I love the alliteration in this letter. It's too bad we haven't had more reviews in the last two issues, but yes, that is one of the reasons I wanted to expand the magazine—and take a look at this month!

I'm sorry if not all the features and reviews are interesting to every reader, but for every person who wants a "consumer reports" briefing on new albums, there's another who wants in-depth criticism and couldn't care less about actually buying film music.

We have a stable bunch of regular reviewers. I hope people have come to recognize the individual tastes and inclinations of myself, Jeff Bond, Andy Dursin, John Bender, etc., and weigh those opinions accordingly in deciding which albums to purchase or avoid.

...I had an idea for a new column in FSM, now that you are a resident of Tinsel Town: It would be a monthly column called, perhaps, "Ask the Composer." Readers would write in with specific questions for specific composers. You, or someone, would glean the answers from said composers and print them.

It would probably take a while to get enough material to print but I think there are a lot of film music fans to supply plenty of questions. And I think most composers are quite willing to participate, in letter form, rather than by phone.

Jack Nelson
4733 West Mountainview Drive #8
San Diego CA 92116

This would present certain logistical problems, but would be interesting. My experience is that it is hard, however, to get enough good, appropriate questions from fans. Plus there are matters of accessibility: I guarantee that the three most-asked composers would be John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith and James Horner, and they are not easily available.

Doug Adams and I have wanted for a while to send a set of the same questions to several composers, and compare the different answers—i.e. who do you admire, what was your most difficult project? Again, easier said than done!

...As a fairly young (35) composer for film in Toronto in my third official year operating my own business, my interests in topical reading are definitely motivated

towards all aspects of starting up and growing into this tight "word-of-mouth" industry. I arrived into this niche market by, of all things, happenstance (!), when I was asked to contribute incidental music for an award-winning documentary on fanzine cultures called *Comic Book Confidential* by Ron Mann. I am proud to have recently finished scoring my 11th film—and sixth feature—three of which were just premiered at the Montreal International Film Festival.

Ever since that experience, my appetite for scoring to picture has been obsessive, as it evidently is for you and your readership. I appreciate having the opportunity to garner "stateside" film industry info with FSM and relish the composer interviews and any/all aspects relating to the technical and creative challenges that all composers for film must surmount.

It would be great if you could feature more articles on "up and coming" composers, such as the Chris Lennertz interview (#61), and international composers outside the U.S., while cutting down (not out) the incessant reader letter bickering akin to a sport of "Composer's Teams" battling it out that, in my view, continues to take up too high a space priority for such a small publication.

As someone who actively goes through the complex and bizarre process of *composing to picture*, I find irrelevant your readers' long treatises about the virtues of one film score that disappoints them within a removed "album" context. Many assumptions about melodic development, leitmotif usage, orchestration choices, or plagiarism are lessened in potency because the music is not being imagined

or physically listened to in the film composer's absolute realm, i.e. *music composed to and for the support of moving pictures*. That is the motivating "dialogue" to which the film composer must sublimate his art—not the soundtrack collectors who will experience the CD/vinyl release of the music in an estranged album format.

In short, watching the movie, listening and appreciating or not appreciating how the music supports the picture will be my finest and most constructive compliment. (I'm still uncomfortable listening to some of my scores without picture.) The resequencing, re-pacing, re-editing or subtracting of the film composer's incidental music cues on CD/album formats is an alteration and in fact mutation of the composer's artistic intent.

One, of course, must have opinions about music, but realize that *film music* is unto itself: imagined, notated, rewritten, negotiated, rewritten, rewritten, orchestrated, arranged, performed and mixed for the sole purpose of giving breadth and breath to visual imagery. That's it. (Of course this statement is rendered meaningless if applied to the notion of "current flavor" pop/rock recording artists given reign in a film as a marketing device; the obscene inclusion of "Guns 'n' Hoses" in *Interview with the Vampire* is but one that comes to mind.)

Lest I rant on too much, I just wanna lend my vox of support to FSM and hope you're not too "burnt" to keep it up...

Nicholas Stirling
Strange Nursery Audio
850 Adelaide Street West
Toronto, Ontario M6J 1B6
Canada

Going Once, Going Twice...

...There are many fine mail-order dealers that sell new product for reasonable prices that are very knowledgeable of composers and film music (i.e. Screen Archives). Indeed, they should be utilized for obtaining new recordings. However, there are some of these "auctioneers," who deal in only used items, who have charged some outrageous prices. If I am looking for a particular CD/LP, please, Mr. Auctioneer, just tell me how much you want and then I will either agree (or disagree) with your request.

Let us forget about the "bids." Hell, "Sotheby's" you are not! Folks, I can listen to any score on a duped cassette rather than the original CD when one of these auctioneers (extortionists) wants \$100!

We all must make a living, but let us be reasonable with one another and forget this auction-opportunism. My fellow travelers, let us stick together and if I happen to have a soundtrack that you're looking for, send me a cassette!

On another topic, that was a great interview with Randy Edelman (#76), although I thought he "overstated" his accomplishment on *The Last of the Mohicans*. I am in complete agreement on his comment that filmgoers did run out of the cinema and attempt to buy the *Mohicans* soundtrack... However, clearly this was for Trevor Jones's theme and not Edelman's "fill-in/connecting" pieces.

Jay Cox
762 B Tremont St
Boston MA 02118

COMING SOON: "MONTHLY" MONTHLY

In a recent posting to FILMUS-L, the Internet film music mailing list, someone suggested that I ban a certain topic in FSM for a month (I forgot what it was). I replied, "I think I should ban mentions of all scores for one month." The all-knowing, all-seeing Recordman (aka Mike Murray) then submitted a table of contents for such a new magazine, to be titled just *Monthly*. Here is the list:

- p.1 Front page: cover photo of Granny from "Beverly Hillbillies."
- p.2 Lukas rants about the ugly pastel colors in L.A.
- p.3 Listing of what all symphony orchestras are not playing this month.
- p.4 Jeff Bond on funny spaceship pictures he saw as a kid.
- p.5 Andy Dursin reviews the best Boston Babes of '96 (and why he bets on them all).
- p.6 Recordman on black vinyl circles with pretty pictures.
- p.11 John Bender explains why those who disagree with him are utter fools.
- p.12 John Stevens of Australia praises the baseball-bat scene of *The Untouchables*.
- p.14 Andy Lewandowski explains the differences between vinyl circles and aluminum/plastic circles.
- p.15 Six-page interview with Henry Goober, best boy during filming of *Porky's Revenge*.
- p.25 Bob Smith on record matrix numbers of Karen Carpenter first presses.
- p.26 Ad from Intrada showing lots of blank circles—"newly remastered in ADD."
- p.27 Score: Soundtrack Reviews: Listing of best sports events shown on ESPN.
- p.30 Paul MacLean discusses bagpipe music in light of his Scottish heritage.
- p.31 Letters to the Editor: Blank graffiti page—fill in your own obscenities.
- Back page: Ad for German bootleg CDs of voice only to *Triumph of the Will*.

Max Dugan Returns (David Shire, 1983): The main theme, played on clarinet, is suitably whimsical. The end title has a touch of Old Mexico. No album, but a cut does appear on *David Shire at the Movies* on Bay Cities.

Did You Hear the One About the Traveling Saleslady? (Vic Mizzy, 1968): The one with Ms. Diller selling player pianos. The end title is a lot of fun, with "gobbling" guitars if I remember correctly.

The Reluctant Astronaut (Mizzy, 1967): Why didn't this get an album on Decca? The main theme is one of the catchiest in Universal's catalog. Call it "Variations of 'Have You Seen the Muffin Man?'" It's a catchy tune, from a memorable score. To me, Mizzy—Mr. Mizzy if you please—writes melody. You know, tunes: how many of today's crop can boast those?

Man's Favorite Sport? (Henry Mancini, 1963): Yet another "why didn't this..."? Wacky sophistication sums this up. Again, the accent is on melody, spiced with Mr. Mancini's inimitable jazz rhythms. My titles would be "Something for Rock" (Willoughby's Theme), "Bear on a Motorcycle," "Landing the Big One," and I suppose, "Rock-a-poogee." Lots of fun.

Who's Minding the Mint? (Lalo Schifrin, 1967); or: Lalo does the Swingle Singers. A "dababada" main theme, with a dose of "Shall We Gather at the River?" during the big chase. No album.

High Time (Mancini, 1960, RCA LSP-2314; six tunes on Camden CAD1-928): "High Time (Main Theme)" is a rouser—check out that tuba solo! The "wackiest" selection would have to be "The Nutty Professor," not used in the film. Fox, put 'er out on video—please. Basically (essentially) a big batch of big band tunes, all by Hank Mancini, except "Second Time Around," by Cahn-Van Heusen. This flick was the prototype for *Back to School*.

Green Acres: "Music to Milk By" (Vic Mizzy, 1966): This is my favorite episode; it's perhaps the funniest! Eleanor the cow eats Eb's radio, just as he was about to enter WPIXI's "name that song" contest. The joke was that even though Eb was naming all the tunes, the tunes played were exactly the same! One of the tunes I remember resembles one in Mizzy's *Don't Make Waves* (1967, MGM SE-4483ST).

The Patsy (David Raksin, 1964): Not exactly wacky, but it does have Jerry Lewis's immortal "I Left My Heart at a Drive-In Movie." A classy bit of Previnism during the restaurant sequence. Mr. Raksin adds a touch of class to Mr. Lewis's enjoyable story.

Sex and the Single Girl (Neal Hefti, 1964): The highlight for me is the chase

sequence that runs 10 minutes. It's essentially an ostinato for strings and harpsichord, punctuated by cries of "faster, faster!," "My taxi! my taxi!," etc., culminating at the LAX (with that cool Jetsons-style hotel). Naturally, it's not on the score album (Warner WS-1572), which didn't even make it into the Schwann! Hefti's first name is misspelled on the label.

Harlow (Hefti, 1965, Columbia OS-2790): This score may not be completely wacky, save for the tunes "Bathtub, Saturday Night," "Carroll Baker A-Go-Go" and "Scrambled Eggs"; it's just that the story takes place from approximately 1928 to 1937, and Hefti's score is strictly 1965. The Columbia LP was unfortunately a re-recording.

Guy McKone
187 Wellington St
Stratford, Ontario N5A 2L7
Canada

...Before the topic of the sick and silly '60s and the wacky world of spy-film music dies a lingering death, I would like to point out that one of the best examples of the type (ignore the fact that it had little to do with spying) can be found in the 1966 Peter Sellers/Neil Simon/Vittorio De Sica/Burt Bacharach comedy *After the Fox*. You get a good taste of *Casino Royale* at least a year prior, plus a hint of J. Barry and a healthy dose of H. Mancini (to be fair, though, Mr. Mancini had already "owned" this genre for a while when 1966 rolled around). You also get the only song performed by The Hollies with Peter Sellers as a member of the group! The only catalog code I can give you is the one for the soundtrack cassette: MCAC-25132. Forget the critics: The film insults everyone including critics and movie fans. Oh yes, if Mr. Hollywood Big-Shot

great scores by this talented musician are *The Long Duel*, *North Dallas Forty*, *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan*, *Winter People*, *Outback*, *Crooks and Coronets*, and most recently *Far from Home*, *Walking Thunder* and *North Star*.

The second composer is Michael J. Lewis, who recently released some CDs of his scores from over a period of 25 years. Prior to this his music was very hard to find except for his LP release years ago of *Madwoman of Chaillot*.

Being able to finally hear his great scores on digitally made CDs is a treasure. His brilliant scores for *The Medusa Touch*, *The Passage*, *The Legacy*, *Unseen*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Rose and the Jackal*, *Sphinx*, and *Upon This Rock* are tantalizing and not only whet your ears but your eyes as well.

These two composers deserve the highest recognition for pure excellence.

Albert K. Bender
PO Box 45713
Los Angeles CA 90045

...After recently watching *Hondo* (1953) and enjoying the magnificent score by Emil Newman, I began watching some other westerns from the '50s and found some gems. There was Franz Waxman's evocative score for *The Indian Fighter* (1955), Leigh Harline's solid *Man of the West* (1958), Victor Young's *The Tall Men* (1955) and *Unconquered* (1947) and the fascinating *Day of the Evil Gun* (1968) by Jeff Alexander.

I'm sure there are many more. What I would appreciate is your enlightening me as to who Emil Newman, Jeff Alexander and Leigh Harline are?

John Francis
8307 Crystal Pointe Lane
Indianapolis IN 46236
bigjohn@in.net

Emil Newman (d. 1984) was another brother of Alfred and Lionel; Jeff Alexander (1910-1989) was a staff composer at MGM for many

years; and Leigh Harline (1907-1969) had a long career working primarily for RKO Radio and 20th Century Fox, as well as Disney, where he was a composer on the original *Snow White* and *Pinocchio*.

...Why wasn't *The Ghost and the Darkness* nominated for an Oscar? Because *Fierce Creatures* made an Executive Decision to shut-out Jerry Goldsmith! Did you know that only composers vote for composers? If you want to fight *City Hall*, you have to First Contact them. If the nominations say "we respect you"; the Oscar says "we like

you." That sounds like a *Chain Reaction!*

Carl Silverman
655 E 14 St
New York NY 10009

Is this letter from The Lonely Guy? See Jeff Bond's review column for similar thoughts about *Ghost* and the *Darkness*. Personally, I suspect it was not nominated... because people didn't think it was good enough.

Deep Thoughts

...I read with interest the interview with Randy Edelman (#76); however, like most new or modern composers, I think he makes the "mistake" of creating a nice melody and "beautiful" cues. This reminds me so much of what John Barry said in his *Moviola* documentary, that most younger composers fail to get into the dramatic aspect of the movie and therefore we get scores that are "music," yet few can make adequate headway "into" the movie and characters.

Take *The Satan Bug* by Jerry Goldsmith: the music is ugly, weird, yet in my opinion saves the movie from oblivion. It is appropriate music, and the beauty is in the creative force. (I want to publicly thank Jim Wynorski, by the way; he is the president of Sunset Films International and kindly sent me a videotape of *The Satan Bug* from the new laserdisc, of the visuals and isolated music-and-effect track of major scenes. No charge! Just a note saying he saw my ad in FSM and thought I'd enjoy it.)

Last of the Mohicans has a pretty score, yet fails to evoke anything "in" the movie. Trevor Jones's music is interesting; Edelman's would rather say nothing. Maybe today there is nothing there to score—and yet Herrmann and Goldsmith in the past, and today even Fenton, can get into the heart of the movie. I think a lot of young composers and directors should watch carefully both *Moviola* and *Bernard Herrmann: Music from the Movies*, not once but many times. Both Barry and Herrmann get to the "heart" of what a score should be—and it's not just "music." (The Jerry Goldsmith documentary, *Film Music Masters*, is good too, although I was shocked to hear the director of *The River Wild* tell Mr. Goldsmith he wanted "threatening music, but not too ominous." What does that mean?)

To the matter of the *Soundtracks on CD* price guide by Bob Smith: It burns me up that a certain collector sends memos to people that trade with him stating that the book is all wrong. Then I saw an article in *Soundtrack!* magazine blasting the guide for not including bootlegs. That so many

collectors use the guide as a "guide" speaks for itself; to me and others this has been a valuable source.

I wonder if any reader has noticed the following regarding Ennio Morricone: Once upon a time Morricone's music was fierce, with kick and power. All of the sudden, with the departure of conductor Bruno Nicolai, the music lost its power and inventiveness. This occurred in the mid-'70s, and later Nicolai died (in 1991, I believe). However, listening to Nicolai's own output I hear what probably happened. Just listen to *Defense de Savoir*, *100,000 Dollars for Ringo*, *Il Conte Dracula*, and *Trono di Fuoco*. I hear in these a lot of the Morricone that gained international recognition; the Morricone whose soundtracks I would buy or movies I would watch on his name alone. Could it be that it was Nicolai who co-authored Morricone's early output? All I can say is "hear the difference"—which is not to say that Morricone is not good, but the urgency and passion of his music disappeared with Nicolai.

Responding to John Barry's comments in regard to tempo (#75), that music can accelerate a scene or not is a very debatable issue. *Glory* and the charging of the fort is scored by James Horner with almost dreamy music, giving it an aural experience of intense anguish. *Chain Reaction's* ice chase is fast and furious music that adds excitement. Barry's spatial music can add intensity with bass tones to a very fast scene. Which is best? I think they are all good; the approach is different, yet very effective in all cases.

One last question: Why on earth does Randy Edelman keep using those irritating keyboards when he's got an orchestra? I find his music good, yet irritating, and watching *Dragonheart* was truly annoying. Can someone tell him this?

Alex Zambra
5644 Lawndale
Houston TX 77023

I'd love to tell Randy Edelman that. Reportedly he enjoys playing keyboards and having his own synth performances blended with the orchestra.

On the Morricone matter, people have speculated as to Bruno Nicolai's input, and there is some consensus that he contributed to Morricone's classic sound and performances. But for my money, comparing post-breakup Morricone with independently composed Nicolai, there's no confusion as to "who was Morricone": that would be Morricone. If Nicolai was the shiny coat of paint, the appearance and look, then Morricone was the car and the engine making it go. •

My friends, the Mail Bag exists as a forum for you. Not as clumsy or as random as the Internet.... an elegant weapon, from a more civilized time. Send your letters in today!
-LK

should run into co-star Paola Stoppa! Tell her, I still love her. Hubba, etc.

A.J. Lehe
132 N Court Street
Talladega AL 35160

...It is time to write about two film composers who deserve recognition for their outstanding contribution to film scoring.

The first is John Scott for his brilliant score for *Antony and Cleopatra* (1973). His music is so right for that time in history and the themes stay with you once you get immersed in his renditions. Other

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For the better part of a decade, Michael Fine has headed up an ambitious recording schedule at Koch International, one entailing not just important repertoire in American concert music but substantial forays into film music.

his last day with Koch. He's been tapped by Deutsche Grammophon to serve as the German label's vice president of A&R, a role that presumably means rumors about Deutsche Grammophon's interest in film music re-recordings may at last come to fruition. While he packs for the move to Hamburg, 26-year-old Susan Napodano DelGiorno will take Fine's place at Koch. DelGiorno, who's been with Koch five years, says it's her intention to pursue some of the same directions Fine charted out. "We're going to see if we can go forward and if we can do it better," she said, adding that she would love to continue the successful Rózsa series.

For all of Rózsa's acclaim in scoring biblical epics, Nick Rózsa says the recording of his father's

great literature. It's never going to be a mass market, but in some ways that makes it easier for someone like me. If you know the audience you're targeting, you can target your marketing and your advertising and actually spend less money and theoretically make more money. I've always had this theory that classical music really supported the pop industry. Sure, we don't sell anywhere near as many albums, but we know if we put out a recording of virtually anything we're going to sell our few thousand copies. Pop involves vast sums of money with great risks and no guarantees of success. But if you put out a recording of a masterpiece, there's an audience for it. I mean, I wish I was the person who had the rights to the Jane Austen novels. They've been selling continuously

The Record Producer Formerly of Koch International

Michael Fine

Recording Miklós Rózsa

by Bill Whitaker

In fact, if he never produces another film music album, he'd still keep the gratitude of film music devotees, thanks to his decision to oversee major re-recordings of such scores as Elmer Bernstein's *The Magnificent Seven* and Miklós Rózsa's *El Cid*. More recently, he produced albums of music by Victor Young (including, at long last, a suite from the western *Shane*) and Alfred Newman (including suites from *Wuthering Heights*, *Prince of Foxes* and *Prisoner of Zenda*). In addition, he's won praise for continued efforts to illuminate concert works by film composers, including Bernard Herrmann (such as the composer's wittily engaging *Currier & Ives Suite*, worthy of any pops-concert program) and Jerome Moross (including a remarkable symphony). Happily, film music is a form that continues to fascinate Fine, even if some of the films themselves most definitely do not.

Case in point: Film noir classics such as *Double Indemnity*, *The Lost Weekend* and *The Killers*. Fine doesn't particularly care for the films, but he relishes the dark, angst-ridden music composed for them by Miklós Rózsa. This spring saw Fine's passion for the music celebrated in a new CD of lengthy suites—26 minutes of *Double Indemnity*, 33 minutes of *The Lost Weekend* and an 11-minute suite to *The Killers*. The release comes along with yet another Koch CD of Rózsa's concert works, including the Hungarian-born composer's violin concerto. Recently, Fine was in New Zealand recording two of Rózsa's other concert works—the piano and cello concerti—also for Koch. He was also overseeing an album of Korngold film suites, including *The Sea Hawk*, *The Sea Wolf*, *Juarez* and *The Private Lives of Elizabeth & Essex*.

Ironically, the film noir release comes as Fine is embarking for new horizons. April 14th marked

film noir suites is long overdue. "I remember him saying that was the period he most enjoyed," the composer's son said. "I know he enjoyed *Ben-Hur* tremendously, and *The Thief of Bagdad* was always a favorite, but he loved the film noir scores. He sometimes used to joke that he felt like the Al Capone of music!" Nick Rózsa also heartily endorses Fine's belief in lengthy suites which allow major themes and motifs from a film the space to develop as pure music. "I mean, two of the suites on this album are about a half-hour long," Rózsa said, "and they have an almost symphonic feel to them. I hope people will appreciate them from that perspective."

Interviewed shortly before announcement of his decision to hook up with Deutsche Grammophon (and, thus, possibly yielding hints of what may now spring up at DG), Fine proved an easy person to converse with, to a point. He's politely guarded in his comments regarding other labels (and no wonder, as it turned out!) but is also surprisingly free in discussing his own projects, including what he regards as misfires.

Bill Whitaker: I've seen and heard conflicting reports on how the classical market is faring. You're running one of the most unique classical labels of all—one now heavily involved in film scores. So how is the market?

Michael Fine: I'm very optimistic about the classical market. I've always been optimistic about it. I know that every day, thousands of people, whether due to a genetic defect or their upbringing or what, they suddenly discover that—horror!—they love classical music. I did as a boy and I had some impetus from family, but there are people who are just now discovering it and loving it. It's just as there are always people discovering

since the last century. Again, it all depends on your perspective. It's wonderful to sell millions of copies of records, but not if your records are costing millions of dollars. My only concern about the future of the industry is those people who say it's a lost cause. They're chasing trends and if you do any investing, the only person who gets rich when you chase trends is your stock broker on every trade. But if you stay the course, I think you're going to come out ahead and on top. You probably won't become the next Bill Gates, but how many Bill Gates do we need in this world?

BW: Some of the reports I see allude to the number of, say, Beethoven sets still coming out, usually from conductors who have nothing new to say on Beethoven.

MF: I won't point any fingers, but major labels are spending far too much money on releases that don't make any sense. And when they don't make any money, they're the ones who get the press saying business is bad. We're not trying to mimic the lifestyles of the leaders of pop culture. It's all a matter of perception. This idea that if you don't have a mass audience you're nowhere is just ridiculous. I have a very comfortable situation. I'm able to record music that I love and care about, share it with a nice audience, and make a living at it. To me that's good. And regarding the standard repertoire, look at all the films that have been made of *Pride and Prejudice* or some such thing. Each generation brings its own sensibilities to a classic work. That's important. Each generation has an obligation to interpret the great masterpieces.

Admittedly, not all of them will stand the test of time. Now, it's true the market is crowded, and there is a message going out all the time that things that don't have mass-appeal are not important. But I know that's not true. It's like classic clothing, it's

always going to be there.

BW: So how are film music re-recordings fitting into all this?

MF: Well, our recording of *The Magnificent Seven* was number five on the *Billboard* chart. That was certainly a symbol of its sales. We made money on it, the orchestra made money on it. I think it did a lot of good for all of us. We're very content with the sales of our film scores.

talked of how we could present it without constant reference to the films themselves.

BW: How did he feel about that? Wasn't he one of these composers who put film music on one level and concert music on another?

MF: Not at all. The thing about the *El Cid* that we did that was



Above: Conductor Richard Kaufman with Michael Fine (r).
Left: Miklós Rózsa around the time of *Double Indemnity*.



BW: How did you get into the film music re-recording business? So many classical labels have yet to discover such a thing. I mean, Nonesuch is getting into the business at long last, and Deutsche Grammophon has supposedly considered it, but many labels continue to pass on this sort of thing.

MF: For me, it was always a music thing. A lot of people assume I'm knowledgeable in film. Invariably I've seen the films after I've recorded the music. When I look at the continuum of classical music, there's a sort of dichotomy in the '60s, when some of the avant-garde decided to ignore the continuum, the history, and I don't view what they did as a continuation but a sidestep. Then you had people like Bernard Herrmann and Miklós Rózsa who continued in the romantic tradition, going further—post-Mahler romantic tradition, if you will. It's like the Bernard Herrmann symphony we recorded. It's a natural outgrowth of what came before. The same with the music of Rozsa. When I met Dr. Rózsa, one of the things we talked about was music for films as music—we

meaningful to me was it didn't really have a reference to the film. Things are in a different order, one cue is not in the film at all, but it is *El Cid* as Rózsa heard it in his musical imagination, as if there had been no film, as if basically it had been a long tone poem on *El Cid*. Having recorded it, it has certainly enhanced my enjoyment of the film, but for me it's entirely a piece of music. Now, what impresses me with Elmer Bernstein's *The Magnificent Seven* is the same thing—how long it holds up as a symphonic score. Again, we made it without constant reference to the film, though, of course, the fact it is linked with the film in people's minds and hearts does help in marketing it.

BW: It's a terrific recording, proof again that lengthy suites or even recordings of virtually complete scores can be musically justifiable—and enjoyable.

MF: Well, that's what's funny about a couple of discs I've just done, the ones of music by Victor Young and Alfred Newman. You know, I said I would never really appreciate those recordings that had four- and five-minute suites, because

there's no time for a conductor to develop the themes. But I went ahead and did it anyway with these recordings involving conductor Richard Kaufman, mostly because I simply love Alfred Newman's *Wuthering Heights* suite and we did it with the choral ending. That works for me, and I think it's one of our most beautiful recordings. I'm very proud of it. Then again, when we decided to do three of Rózsa's film noir scores, I asked (orchestrator/arranger) Pat Russ and Nick Rózsa, Dr. Rózsa's son, if we could expand the traditional suites already available so that our conductor, Jim Sedares, could develop them. So we commissioned longer suites, because I very much wanted time for the music to develop as music. I think that worked quite well, too.

You know, one surprise—it's always funny when you're in the studio, what you think is the most significant. In the studio we didn't really care much for *The Killers*. But listening to it after having edited and mastered it, we think "Prison Stars," the second movement of *The Killers* suite, is one of the most beautiful movements I've ever heard. It reminds me a lot of the second movement of the Barber Second Symphony.

BW: Which, of course, you also recorded some years ago for the Stradivari label.

MF: Yes. I have a great affinity for that work. I'm also very impressed with the way *The Lost Weekend* turned out. But I've got to give most credit to our conductor, James Sedares. When you go to make these recordings, we do what we call rehearse/recording. Basically, the orchestra sight-reads a section, then we record it. Jim is so good at this that the first readings of *Double Indemnity* and *Lost Weekend* already had shape. His ability to create an interpretation from scratch is remarkable.

The hardest one of all was the Rózsa symphony we recorded a few years ago—the parts were a mess, there were a lot of things that weren't clear. And Jim has never conducted these works in concert, the orchestra had never seen them. We have five two-and-a-half-hour calls with about a half-hour of break, and to go in there and from scratch create the sense that this is music they've done before is tough. He is an extraordinary conductor. It'd be one thing if he'd had a chance to do these

works in concert and live with them, but to just sort of pull them off like that is an extraordinary gift. I'm fortunate to work with him.

BW: He's very good. But has he ever come up to you and said, "All right, Fine, I've done enough of these damned film things, how about letting me take a crack at Shostakovich?"

MF: No, and the reason why is that he understands the business as well. He understands that recording careers and concert careers are very separate. Unfortunately, the way the business is going, it's very hard to have a young artist consider doing standard literature. I mean, Jim and I have worked together recording the Beethoven piano concerti and the *Pictures at an Exhibition*, *Night on Bare Mountain* and the Bach-Stokowski Toccata and Fugue in D minor, and we've done a Copland record. The real irony is that what he does best is the standard repertoire. I was listening to an Eroica of his in Phoenix that was second to none. He's a great conductor and he makes it happen. It's not easy to go into a studio and create an interpretation with nothing to base it on.

BW: Back to Rózsa. With all due respect to his biblical films, *El Cid* and all that, I've always felt his period in the '40s and early '50s, including the film noir scores, offered by far his most interesting music. I'm amazed it's taken this long for them to be re-recorded in extensive form. What caused you to consider the Rózsa film noir album?

MF: Well, I have this funny, debilitating disease. If I like a composer and I like his idiom, I tend to like almost everything that composer wrote. I'm nuts about Delius, for instance, and I tend to like everything he wrote, because I like the idiom and the sensibilities that go into it. Now, I know that's a minority taste in this country, possibly even in Britain. As for Rózsa, I always find there's more and more to explore. You know the only score of his that I've heard that didn't do anything for me was the *Lady Hamilton* film. Possibly if I sat back with the music, away from the movie, I might like that, too. But the film noir scores are profoundly

MF: You're going to laugh after all the praise we've gotten on the *Magnificent Seven* album. It was my fault—I saw the movie only after I made the record—but there are two wrong chords. They drive me out of my mind now. I've just heard Elmer's going to do the whole thing. We're renting the music to Varèse Sarabande.

BW: He wants to do the whole thing again?

MF: Yes. I love our recording, but I certainly understand if he wants to do his own. Anyway, I mentioned to the gentleman from Varèse that I'd sure love to have those chords fixed! It's in the cue "Strange Funeral."

BW: Well, I can't blame you for not wanting to sit through the film. I guess it's not very trendy to say this, but it's a horrible film. I mean, there're some good scenes but as a whole it's pretty weak.

MF: I don't get much out of the film. You know, I have to laugh. I was in the back yard mowing the lawn, just after our recording came out, and some guy phoned. I don't know how he found me, but he was on the line saying, "I hate that recording of yours!" I said, "Well, I'm sorry but why don't you like it?" And he said, "It's not exactly like the film." I said, "How could it be? It's not a soundtrack, it's a reconstruction, a recreation."

BW: That must be disheartening to hear, especially on projects as mammoth as, say, *El Cid*.

MF: On that, Christopher Palmer had just begun to become sick. He did one of the cues of *El Cid*—the palace music—just before he died. Two of his students filled in the rest of the gaps. In the recording sessions, of course, we take certain liberties with what we have to work with because there are always things that don't make sense. With or without reference to the film, we always exercise our critical, editorial and musical judgment on everything we record. But Pat Russ, who's been doing some of our reconstructions lately, is very good with us. It was so ironic. We found out *Magnificent Seven* won the Deutsche Schallplatten the day Christopher Palmer died. My wife and I were in London and visited him in the hospital the

lasting mere minutes and saying virtually nothing.

MF: The idea with us is to create a piece where something could happen musically. I also think Rózsa—unlike Herrmann and some of the others—worked best in a longer, more symphonic form, that development of an idea was something he could do as well as any major composer. To permit anything less in our recordings would be to do an injustice to the music. I mean, I sure wasn't interested in making a souvenir of three movies that I don't even like!

BW: Well, *Double Indemnity* is quite a classic, and so is *The Lost Weekend*. But overall I think you're right. There are so many stellar film scores for less-than-stellar films. In any case, the *Double Indemnity* score is a very austere work—as you say, black and white. You know, I was surprised to hear that the music was already available in shortened form.

MF: There were existing suites available for rent that are occasionally performed, I would guess. We just decided to expand them. I really thought the music needed to be developed more.

BW: So many critics are forever castigating film music because the music doesn't seem to develop much, yet when we're given short suites of these things, so often they're just the main title and love theme and there's no development. The thing is, these themes are quite often developed in the full scores, and with great flair and imagination.

MF: Another thing that's vitally important is the transitional music. I really enjoy the transition sections in music, and when you do these short suites, there's just modulation, next tune, as opposed to really letting the composer create the change. I mean, look at Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, in which the Nibelung music becomes the Valhalla music over the course of time. It's done so brilliantly. Whether you're a musician and know it consciously or a casual listener getting it all subconsciously, we're dealing with the same types of greed and lust and evil and that sort of thing. And Wagner's been nice enough to give you the time to figure it all out. Now, for conductors, the hardest

Major labels spend far too much money on releases that don't make any sense. And when they don't make any money, they're the ones who get the press saying business is bad.

brooding scores. We said in our liner notes that no one else painted better in black. These scores are about the city, about alienation, and I think Miklós Rózsa was a man who felt very much out of place. Here was a man whose image is always that of a dapper, courtly, East European gentleman, always in jacket and tie, walking around in the hot sun of Los Angeles or on a soundstage, yet still a man of Old World tastes. He came from a landed Hungarian family and he was a gentleman and I think there always was this nostalgia about him, this sense of loss almost, though in a very kind way. I think for some reason that sense of alienation plays very well in the film noir genre.

BW: Well, it certainly is a different shade than, say, your recording of *The Magnificent Seven*.

day before, and the next day we got the call we'd won the Deutsche Schallplatten and I rang up the hospital to tell Christopher. They told me he'd just passed away. It's odd, but the day I started to edit *El Cid* was the very day Rózsa died. I was going to give him a call.

BW: I'm sure he would've loved to have heard that.

MF: Well, Rózsa's family told me this series of recordings we've undertaken had given him a new lease on life. In a funny sort of way, by stalling work on *El Cid*, I thought he might hang in there a little longer, but it wasn't to be.

BW: Well, I'm impressed we have lengthy suites on this film noir album. I think a few conductors and producers are finally getting the idea that this material should be treated with more respect than some suite

thing to do is effectively make that transition. There's a lot of conductors who can't do it and we have to do it in the editing room.

BW: The New Zealanders must be a marvelous bunch. How do they respond to all this? I mean, when they see Michael Fine and his wife Tamra and James Sedares, they must be thinking, "Oh, no, what now?"

MF: Well, I've been going to New Zealand for ten years now and I look at it as a home away from home. I mean, I dream about the place. It's the only place I go where on the very last day, I say to my wife, "Do we really have to go home?" And it has a very, very special orchestra. It has a lot of young Americans, a lot of very talented New Zealanders. It's international in the best sense of the word. There's always been a lot of enthusiasm.

Rózsa Noir

Miklós Rózsa liked to joke that as a film composer he had been typecast four times: "In Hollywood nothing succeeds like success and if you prove yourself good at doing something they want you to keep doing it." First came the identity with exotic settings, touched off by *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940). Then the film noir period, with items like *Double Indemnity* (1944) and *The Killers* (1946), leading to a slew of movies of psychological drama caused by the success of *Spellbound* (1945). In 1951 he entered what would become an acclaimed specialty, the scoring of films of biblical and historical nature, starting with *Quo Vadis?* and continuing with *Ivanhoe* (1952), *Young Bess* (1953), *Ben-Hur* (1959) and *El Cid* (1960).

Much as he may have objected to the term "typecasting," there is little doubt that what first comes to mind at the mention of his career is his success with the biblical and historical epics. But how typical of him as a composer is that aspect of his output? It might be argued that it is not at all typical, since there is little comparison between those scores and his non-film works. He always claimed that his film music and his absolute music were separate bodies, while allowing that if any aspect of his movie scoring might be allied to his concert and chamber works, it might be the scores he wrote for films noir. The films that most challenged and involved him were those of darkly dramatic nature, such as *The Killers* and *The Lost Weekend* (1945), and anyone familiar with Rózsa's Symphony of 1930,

A new Koch recording of music from *The Lost Weekend*, *Double Indemnity* and *The Killers* points up a particular aspect of Miklós Rózsa's film career.

his various concerti and particularly his Sinfonia Concertante (1957) will have no trouble recognizing the stylistic relationship.

In making *Double Indemnity* Billy Wilder, who co-scripted with Raymond Chandler from the James M. Cain novel, asked Rózsa not to in any way glamorize the film, although that is what Paramount would have

preferred. The studio's music director felt that the rhythmic and harmonic asperities Rózsa used in this score belonged in Carnegie Hall, not in a film. Fortunately, Wilder stood by his composer and not a note was changed, resulting in an Oscar nomination.

Double Indemnity is uncompromisingly noir. There are no appealing characters in this cold-blooded drama in which a woman (Barbara Stanwyck) seduces a glib insurance agent (Fred MacMurray) into helping her murder her husband so she can collect on a double indemnity policy. For this stark story Rózsa wrote a stark score, emphasizing, albeit subtly, the ugliness of the people and the situation. With much of the story told in flashbacks by the badly wounded insurance man, Rózsa uses a nervously running motive for tremolo strings to set up each stage of his confession. Especially effective is his theme for the woman, voluptuous in an edgy, sordid sort of way. The nature of the film is immediately revealed in the credit title sequence, as the husband-victim limps on crutches in the dark, with Rózsa matching his dragging footsteps in a lugubrious timpani beat à la *marche funèbre*. Wilder and Rózsa had indeed created a film noir.

The Lost Weekend, yet another Billy Wilder classic, was also noir but with a good deal more compassion in its intent. It was Hollywood's first honest depiction of alcoholism, revealing the effect of a man's addiction to the bottle, with a performance from Ray Milland that won him an Oscar. In this he is a man of good background, a writer, but an alcoholic incapable of controlling his urge to drink. He becomes increasingly

devious as his condition worsens, pawning his typewriter, stealing money, until he ends up in an alcoholic ward at

New York's Bellevue Hospital. He escapes but later in his apartment he sinks into delirium and imagines a bat flying out of the wall and killing a mouse. He next tries to pawn the fur coat of his devoted girlfriend (Jane Wyman) in order to buy a gun to kill himself, but she manages to talk him out of it. The film ends on a note of hope, which is the only major vari-

ance from the Charles R. Jackson novel on which it is based.

Rózsa's score for *The Lost Weekend* was another milestone in dramatic film composition, one particularly challenging for him since he was a man who never drank. It became an exercise in imagination to underline musically the dementia brought about by the craving for alcohol. His use of the theremin, an electronic instrument manipulated by the movements of a hand held over it, thereby producing sound oscillations, proved perfect as the wail of a disturbed psyche. Outstanding is the bat-mouse scene,

with its nerve-wracking orchestral jolts. How terrified and unnerved the alcoholic becomes by this imagined horror is clearly pointed up by the scoring, as is every incident in this lost, painful weekend. *The Lost Weekend* is in fact a film saved by its score. Paramount originally decided it didn't need music but preview audience reactions, some of them jocular, changed their minds. It is Rózsa's music that gives the film its sorrow and its horror. It also helped the film to win an Oscar as the Best Picture of 1945. Rózsa was nominated—he didn't win. That was the year he won for *Spellbound*, although he always felt *The Lost Weekend* should have been the winner.

The Killers is a particularly noted entry in the Rózsa catalogue because its celebrated four-note theme (dum-dum-dum-dum) was appropriated (without permission) by the popular television series *Dragnet*. Universal sued the producers of *Dragnet* and won the case, with the royalties on the theme thereafter divided between the two publishers. *The Killers* was the first of three films made by writer-producer Mark Hellinger and scored by Rózsa—the others were *Brute Force* (1947) and *The Naked City* (1948)—each dealing with the darker side of the American crime scene. Rózsa had a high regard for Hellinger and these three films: "These were tightly packed, powerful dramas about the underworld, whose protagonists Hellinger knew so well, and a world of passion, crime and

violence. They introduced a hitherto unknown force and brutal reality to the screen and I was fortunate to be able to score them."

An imaginative expansion of a short story by Ernest Hemingway, *The Killers* tells of a pair of gunmen who arrive in a small town to kill a man



Ray Milland in *The Lost Weekend*.

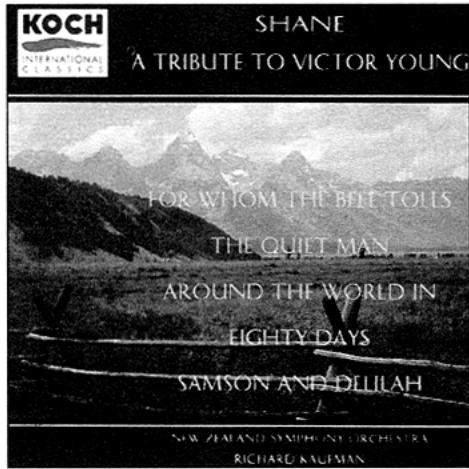
they know of as Swede (Burt Lancaster), an ex-boxer who had become involved with racketeers. Rózsa's score punctuates the harsh plot and underlines both the squalor and the gentler side of the good-hearted but doomed Swede. Arranged as a short suite, the music becomes a dark rhapsody on the American underworld of that period.

On the face of it Rózsa was not an obvious choice to score films dealing with the underside of American life. His musical roots were deep in Hungarian and German culture, but such was his skill as a composer that he could embrace this material and give it not only appropriate but fresh treatment. If he was, as he claimed, constantly being typecast, it was simply that he proved expert at whatever genre he tackled. In the course of a career that stretched from 1937 to 1981 he scored just about every kind of film, all the while saying that whatever he wrote for films was quite a separate part of his life and had little bearing on his other interests. He may have spent the greater portion of his life living in Hollywood hills, but his heart always seemed to be elsewhere, perhaps in Budapest, London, Paris or Rome. Andre Previn, who was at MGM the same time as Rózsa, recalls often seeing him wandering around deep in thought: "Poor Miklós. He was always the most European of gentlemen, and his dark suits in the sunshine typified how out of place he was."

-Tony Thomas

When I first did the Barber Second, there was a certain measure of skepticism, because they had never done a recording the way we do it, which, as I say, is rehearse/recording. I think we have built a measure of credibility for ourselves with the recordings over the years. I mean, there are musicians who are in the orchestra who would love to be doing Beethoven but they understand.

BW: How about this Victor Young recording your



label produced recently? It seems a little different than some of the albums you've done. It's more of a showbiz, greatest-hits type of approach—the very thing you've just argued against.

MF: That record and the Newman album came about after another company had dropped the Young and Newman projects. I was delighted to take them. I took them as is, intact, even though they're not the type of records I normally would make, because we like to do these expanded symphonic treatments. But the *Shane* score is very enjoyable. My wife got to play honky-tonk piano for the *Around the World in 80 Days* suite. It's funny. She did the organ in *El Cid*, honky-tonk piano in *Around the World in 80 Days* and she's on the theremin in *Lost Weekend*. She's a very important part of our operation. She does all the instruments nobody else plays! With the honky-tonk piano part, we had recorded it in New Zealand with their very fine keyboard player on an electric honky-tonk piano, and I thought, "Oh, no, this is awful." Well, we were in Master Sound Studio doing something and there was a tack piano in the studio and I said, "Can we borrow this for ten minutes?" We put some tape in and I said, "Tamra, play these eight bars." It's quite a bit better-sounding than the electric-type piano!

BW: So the reconstructions were already done for the Young and Newman albums?

MF: Yes, and the project wouldn't have happened if we hadn't picked this up. We had a good time with it. I didn't know any of the music.

BW: Victor Young is something of a grand afterthought in golden-age film music. It's too bad, too.

MF: They're all lovely scores, but the thing that really surprised me was the Alfred Newman record. I simply love that record. This is fine music. This is wonderful music. I listen to it over

and over again.

BW: It's odd. Newman's garnered a lot of respect but he hasn't really caught fire in the film music re-recording end of things.

MF: I think what got me was the *Wuthering Heights* score and its choral ending. It appealed to me. It passed my 15-minute test. I did go out and get the film before we did that one and you've got that opening scene on the moors and this chilling music and this oddly triumphant choral ending for what is basically a bleak and unhappy story. I was also a sucker for the swashbuckler music in *Prince in Foxes*. The music turned out to have great appeal to me. I'm looking now at doing the complete *Captain of Castile*.

BW: That was one of the first soundtrack albums ever released, though I think Newman actually re-recorded it just for the album.

MF: Mrs. Newman was very kind in photocopying the parts for the Newman album. You know, so much of this music is treated in cavalier fashion by the studios.

BW: Was it an easy album to do?

MF: I guess the difficult part for me was with *Princes of Foxes* and *Dragonwyck*, where we basically had just straight cues to work with. We didn't have real transitional material, which as I said I think is so crucial to making a recording exciting. For some of the cues we actually created our own endings in the studio. I just wanted to have enough material that when I got home to edit it and master it I'd be able to make those transitions. It's the only thing I think might be less than successful but I have to say it doesn't bother me, I'm so used to the record now. But these are basically just cue books we worked from.

BW: I'm glad you found Newman's music so appealing. Much of his music from the 1940s rates re-recording. I notice that you've been unusually faithful to Rózsa's concert music.

MF: I told Dr. Rózsa I would record all his concert music.

BW: Are you sorry you said that?

MF: No, not at all. I'm happy we could release, along with the film noir album, a recording of his Concerto for Strings and the Violin Concerto. We made a recording of the Concerto for Strings before but I was not happy with it. I always said I was going to re-do that. But it's a very difficult work. It's very hard to play. Everyone playing in the strings has to be a virtuoso. But the key work on that record is the first modern recording of the Violin Concerto, which of course was written for Jascha Heifetz in 1956. In my opinion it is the most difficult of all the major violin concerti.

BW: There's one that's more difficult—Louis Gruenberg's violin concerto. It's a wonderful concerto, full of zesty Americana. Bad thing is, Heifetz was the only one who could play it! Everybody else takes one look at it and runs!

MF: Igor Gruppman plays like a god, though I have to say, when I proposed the Rózsa concerto he was a little taken back. Heifetz is almost an icon among violinists. In fact, I was working in Detroit

a few weeks back and someone said, "Who had the nerve to dare record the Rózsa concerto?" But Heifetz does a brilliant job. Another thing is he plays all the notes. I mean, Heifetz is brilliant, wonderful, a great violinist, but he does a lot of faking, to be blunt, and he plays it awful fast, almost as if to get it over. And there's wonderful accompaniment from Jim and the orchestra. Also, with our recording, the orchestra isn't a mile away like in the old RCA recording, though that may have been smart because in the old Rózsa recording they're not together very much. Heifetz is just cruising ahead. But I think Heifetz adds a measure of soul to the piece. He only had a few weeks to learn it, too.

BW: Well, releasing albums of Rózsa's concert and film music together is a nice touch. Film music has always had trouble winning respect from classical critics. Do you feel it's an uphill battle with the critics?

MF: My only problem is the film score addicts who are looking for an exact recreation of the movie music. And our tempi may be a little different, because we're not having to sync it to something moving up there on a screen. On the other hand, I met with the head of a major European label and, of all the records I've made, the one he was most excited about was *El Cid*. So we have no problems. I know a lot of conductors who are very excited about film music. I'm talking to a very important conductor who wants to record Newman's *The Robe*. But the ones I've beenpilloried by are the real hardcore movie music fans.

BW: Are you still planning on tackling Herrmann's Journey to the Center of the Earth? I thought I read something about that in *Films in Review*.

MF: Oh, we're still talking about it. Part of the problem is the vast orchestral requirements. We're just trying to find all the players. There are a few Korngold things we'd also like to do as 30- or 40-minute suites. And this spring I'm doing the Rózsa cello and piano concerto. We also want to do a big Rózsa biblical epic album, complete with choruses—*King of Kings*, *Ben-Hur*, that sort of thing.

I love working with chorus. We have 46 records in the can at the moment and we're making them at a faster rate. And there's no danger of us running out of material.

BW: You've also tackled the concert music of Jerome Moross. Any chance of you doing his film works?

MF: Haven't yet. I'm also in a project to tackle all the concert music of Ernest Bloch. There's no end to it all. I was talking to the head of another record label and he said, "You know, there's just no repertoire left to record," and I thought, "Boy, you are so wrong, there's so much left!"

Oh, God, if I just had the time and the money!

BW: Interest in film music continues to increase, too.

MF: Well, I think it is being taken more seriously. Maybe it's because popular culture is being taken more seriously these days, which I'm not sure I approve of 100 percent. On the other hand, I'm thankful that great composers like Miklós Rózsa gave us more music than they might've otherwise because they worked for the films. Same with Herrmann.

Orchestrating Past and Present

Patrick Russ

Interview by Bill Whitaker

One of the key people behind Koch International's new album of Miklós Rózsa film noir scores is Patrick Russ, a 42-year-old orchestrator who's worked with some of Hollywood's most active composers, including Elmer Bernstein, Maurice Jarre, Marc Shaiman, Michael Kamen and Mark McKenzie.

In classical circles, Russ's arrangements have been performed by guitarist Christopher Parkening, vocalists Kathleen Battle, Jessye Norman, Placido Domingo and in the Opening Ceremonies of the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

A graduate of the University of California at Santa Barbara, Russ was given his start by Elmer Bernstein and had the opportunity to train with the late film music orchestrator, reconstructionist and author Christopher Palmer—an invaluable experience now that he's reconstructing major film scores from Hollywood's golden age.

In this interview, the Los Angeles-native talks about his admiration for Rózsa's film music, which presumably helped when he had to reconstruct the main title to *El Cid* entirely from the film since not even a piano-conductor reduction could be found. Besides his work with Miklós Rózsa and his son Nick, Russ reflects on work under Christopher Palmer, future projects (everything from an expanded suite of Rózsa's powerful 1947 *Desert Fury* score to Elmer Bernstein's rousing 1963 *The Great Escape* score), past work on a Victor Young recording, and golden age film music in general.

Bill Whitaker: All right, just how many times did you have to watch *The Killers* to put together that suite of music?

Patrick Russ: Quite a lot! But I was fortunate in that I worked mostly from piano-conductor parts. My collaborator, Jon Kull, and I were able to play through those until we could get a real sense of the music, along with watching the film, of course.

There is music included in the suites that had been omitted from the film. This was especially true in the middle movement of *The Killers*, a movement called "Prison Stars." It's a wonderful sequence but only half of it was included in the film.

BW: How well notated were the piano-conductor parts?

PR: Well, Rózsa always gave a good indication of the colors he wanted. And even though the refined points may not have made it to a copyist's reduction of these scores, at least we knew what colors he had in mind. We also had a few original scores from *The Lost Weekend* and *Double Indemnity*, and when I was able to, I used those. Nick Rózsa had them from his father's estate.

BW: Wow, that's pretty rare.

PR: Absolutely. Often everything is lost in these old film scores. But we had materials filled out by Eugene Zador, Dr. Rózsa's orchestrator. Sometimes I could tell Zador was in a terrific hurry.

BW: How did you decide what scores to do for the film noir album?

PR: That was Nick's choice. He wanted to do these three scores. Nick had a huge input on this album, he was really helpful. He has a good sense about music. Even though by trade he is not a musician, he has inherited his father's good instincts. Nick was helpful in selecting the movie scores and the individual cues to be included.

BW: So these three scores were Nick's favorites?

PR: Well, there was one other film, *Desert Fury*, which is a great score. But to have included it, we would've had to pare down everything else, including *Desert Fury*, and we thought, let's wait and do *Desert Fury* right. It also deserves a lengthy suite.

BW: I'd love to hear a good 30- or 40-minute suite of *Desert Fury*. I think it's Dr. Rózsa's finest score from that period. I'm glad we can look forward to that.

PR: You know one great thing about Rózsa is that even the music he scored under the dialogue is compelling.

BW: So you knew Rózsa?

PR: Yes, for a few years. I only knew him after he'd had his stroke. I first met him through Christopher Palmer here in Los Angeles at Rózsa's home.

BW: Different film composers seem to have different levels of excitement as to whether their film scores are preserved or not. What was Dr. Rózsa's attitude?

PR: Well, he was a classical composer, first and foremost, but I think he really enjoyed having his film music re-recorded as a soundtrack or as a suite. Of course, he was an outstanding conductor of his own music, one of the great conductors of film music.

BW: Was there a particular score he felt strongly about, one that he really wanted to stand out, regardless of whether it came with a hit film?

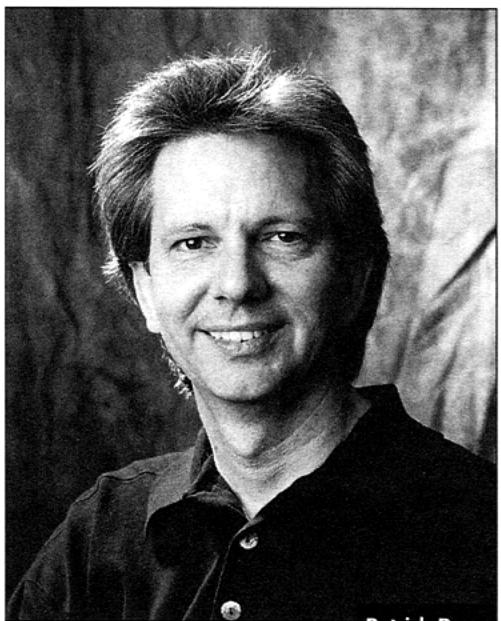
PR: He really did like *The Lost Weekend*. You know, *Spellbound* and *The Lost Weekend* were both nominated for an Academy Award at the same time, and at first he said he had no preference. He told his friends to vote for whatever they wanted. But then he thought more about it and decided he favored *The Lost Weekend*. And *Spellbound* won! I know he also liked *El Cid* a lot and that reconstruction was something we started before he passed away. *El Cid* was a wonderful score, and so much of it had been left out of the actual film, so we tried to include some of those missing cues.

BW: Nick Rózsa was telling me one of his own favorites is *Lady Hamilton*.

PR: Yes, and I know Dr. Rózsa liked that score as well. But really he wrote so many great ones.

BW: He certainly had more than his fair share of quality scores.

PR: There's so much there, it's really remarkable.



Patrick Russ

Even a comedy score, like his last one, *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*, is absolutely terrific.

BW: How did you meet Christopher Palmer?

PR: It was through Elmer Bernstein. I had orchestrated a couple of cues for Elmer on some of his films in the 1980s—*Ghostbusters* and *Black Cauldron*—and Christopher had come over to help him finish one of the film scores. And later Elmer suggested to me, very kindly, "Have you ever thought you might like to go over to England

and study with Christopher?" I said I'd jump at the chance. He said he'd see what he could do and he did. I would fill out Christopher's sketches. It was truly learning under fire. You learn a tremendous amount quite quickly. Christopher would take the composer's sketches and annotate them further and then I would fill out the scores. You could see what Christopher added to the composer's sketches, and then the final product. We worked with a number of composers—Stanley Myers and Elmer Bernstein and Maurice Jarre. We also did a lot of reconstructions of scores by Rózsa, Alfred Newman, Korngold and Waxman. Christopher was one of the early people involved in preserving composers' works from the golden age of Hollywood. In retrospect, he was one of the most brilliant orchestrators of our time. And he was wonderfully steeped in the classics. He was an authority on the Polish composer Szymanowski, an expert on opera, and, of course, he knew the British composers really well—Walton, Vaughan Williams and Britten.

BW: Too many in the actual film music business seem to have a disappointingly narrow focus as far as classical music. I mean, they may know Korngold's *The Sea Hawk* but have never bothered to listen to, say, Richard Strauss's *Don Juan*.

Speaking of romantics, I see you were involved in Koch's *Victor Young* album.

PR: I think John Waxman, who has been really

pivotal in rescuing film music, recommended me to Koch for reconstructions of *Shane*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *Samson and Delilah*. I should add that these recordings only came into being through the efforts of people like Bob Bernstein and Ridge Walker at Paramount, Jon Kull, who co-arranged *Samson and Delilah*, and my proofreader, Warren Sherk. Some of the suites they had wanted had already been reconstructed, such as the *Tribute to Victor Young* by Henry Mancini. But they were looking for some other films and, well, *Shane* has always been one of my favorites. One nice thing is we were able to do things from *Shane* that had been left out of the film. Now, John [Waxman] knew this and I didn't, for this one sequence where *Shane* is coming in for the final climax, the big gun battle, Victor Young actually wrote a long sequence of four or five minutes which the director pulled and substituted with a Franz Waxman cue—a library cue he tracked in!

BW: What are you doing now?

PR: One of the best things about my job is that I get to work with terrific contemporary and on great scores from the golden age. I've just completed the orchestrations for *Le Jour et la Nuit* with Maurice Jarre and worked with Marc Shaiman on *First Wives Club* and *Ghosts of Mississippi*. Right now, I'm working with Jack Hayes on orchestrations for *Free Willy 3* with composer Cliff Eidelman. Jack and I are also collaborating on a recon-

struction of *The Great Escape* by Elmer Bernstein.

Unfortunately, the full scores and parts were lost in a fire at Goldwyn Studios. Jack and Leo Shuker were the original orchestrators for that film, so Jack and I are reorchestrating the score from the reductions that exist. It's really fun. It's for Varèse Sarabande. Elmer will be conducting.

BW: How do you explain increasing interest in film music?

PR: Film music is now recognized as a legitimate art form in music circles. Twenty years ago, when I was in college, film music was not considered "serious" music. I think it's also because of people like Elmer Bernstein, Christopher Palmer, John Waxman and Tony Thomas promoting the idea that people can listen to these wonderful scores beyond the films themselves.

BW: What are you listening to these days? What are your favorites?

PR: I enjoy listening to the music of Vaughan Williams, Walton, Shostakovich and Prokofiev. By the way, some people may not be aware that much of the film music by these composers has become standard classical repertoire. *Sinfonia Antarctica* comes from Vaughan Williams's music for *Scott of the Antarctic*. And the Walton scores for the Olivier Shakespeare films are standard concert works. I enjoy Maurice Jarre's scores for the David Lean films. And, of course, Elmer Bernstein's scores. I never get tired of those. •

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SCORE

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Rosewood ★★★½

JOHN WILLIAMS

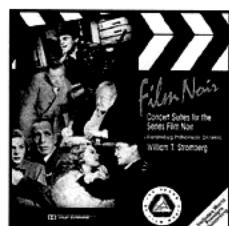
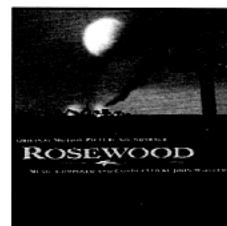
Sony Classical SK 63031. 15 tracks - 49:32

Not long after his neophyte period of "assembly line" assignments were winding down, but before he entered the grandiloquent phase derived from the *Star Wars* symphonic genre, John Williams reached his maturity as a composer. *Rosewood* revisits much of that time, representing a crossroads in Williams's canon (when modest ensembles were the order of the day) and evoking his classier, subtle work from the early 1970s, such as *The Reivers*, *Conrack* and *Cinderella Liberty*.

The title track, "Rosewood," underscores one of the few lighter moments of the film. French horns and country fiddles, accentuated with acoustic and bass guitar, washboard, harmonica, and piano, lend a pastoral texture to the initially peaceful Southern atmosphere and quaint, prosperous town. "The Town of Sumner" is the parallel opposite; the theme is primarily adorned with country-flavored, hillbilly accents, with brief, dark passages of low piano and brass that characterize the unsophistication of the neighboring white-trash town. French horns, a favorite instrument of Williams in conveying personal reflections (like the wonderful Smallville cues from *Superman*) reappear in the dirge-like "Healing"; piano solos enhance the melancholic "After the Fire"; while harmonica and flutes prevail in the quaint "love theme" ("Scrapie and Mann Bond").

"Look Down, Lord" is one of three classy, heart-rending, a cappella gospel songs written by Williams, well describing the suffering of Rosewood's residents when things go awry. It's somewhat restrained, yet brings out a sense of urgency. The lyrics are a merciful cry, and yet try to comfort in the time of need. "The Hounds of Sumner," heard during scenes when men from the neighboring town begin their witch hunt on Rosewood, briefly incorporates a frenetic variation of the above piece, supplemented with Jew's harp and brisk strings. The other two vocal works, "Light My Way" and "The Freedom Train" (the latter of which is heard in the climactic scene as the women and children board their ride to safety) have surging choruses, liberating and inspiring. Gospel singer Shirley Caesar adds her vocal solos to "Aunt Sara's Death" and "The Town Burns" (reprises of "Look Down, Lord") in a haunting, disturbing way. "Look Down, Lord (Reprise and Finale)" re-introduces the full chorus and orchestra, concluding the film on a bittersweet note.

Director John Singleton's liner notes reminisce about growing up with Williams's music. In his closing statements, Singleton says words to the effect that Williams's score provided the essence of *Rosewood*. That rings true. In approaching a movie based on one of the darkest episodes in American history, John Williams delivered an emotional powerhouse of despair, tragedy, hope, and loss. Yet, for all its desolate nature, it never undermines the score's spirituality... or its humanity. *-Jack H. Lee*



Evita ★★★

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER, LYRICS BY TIM RICE

Warner Bros. 9 46346-2.

Disc one: 14 tracks - 57:42; disc two: 17 tracks - 51:01

Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's quasi-opera on the life of Argentina's most celebrated heroine finally takes off in this lavishly produced movie, a nearly non-stop musical number that ranges in style from ballad to pop to operatic to hard rock. Some songs have become such standards (notably "Don't Cry for Me Argentina"), that there's already a breed of familiarity to them; Roger Ebert said the popularity of Webber/Rice was mainly due to the fact that their work was superfluous to the point where you simply could not forget it.

Seasoned veteran Jonathan Pryce does an engaging job as Juan Peron (never mind the E.G. Marshall bad hair day from *Superman II*), but song-wise his presence is far and few in-between. Antonio Banderas, never known for his singing, provides some nice moments in his role as Che (the narrator) giving bite to "Oh What a Circus," "High, Flying Adored" and "Waltz for Che and Evita." As for Madonna, never before has her voice carried this sort of energy or urgency. Some of the music may have been re-arranged to fit her vocal range, but it pays off: key songs like "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" pack a punch.

The soundtrack is quite literally just that; there is only a minuscule amount of spoken dialogue in the film. (However, much of the fine incidental material—instrumental versions of the songs—has not been included on the album.) The first half of the movie is where the songs are the most fun, covering Evita's early days and rise to prominence (the Latino rhythms in "Buenos Aires" are particularly enjoyable) while the second half is on the subdued side. Another song, "Goodnight and Thank You" (where Evita spurns various lovers while working her way to the top) loses some of its sarcastic impact, as it relies on a brief, but insultingly comical gesture on the lyric, "...which means—!"

There are two new songs utilized for this film version. The first, "The Lady's Got Potential" (an unused number from the original stage play, sung here by Banderas) is a catchy honky-tonk, rocking commentary piece that plays against the images of Argentina's upheaval. The other song re-teams Webber with his estranged partner Rice: the Oscar-winning "You Must Love Me" is a tender ballad, sung off-screen to scenes of an ailing Evita near the end of the film. It's addressed to her husband, and, in a way, is weak since it basically reiterates that she is dying and there was not enough time, etc.

Movie musicals have been conspicuous by their absence in recent years. Yet, they still play an important cornerstone to film music as an art

form (witness Disney's surge of success in animated films since *The Little Mermaid*). The release of *Evita* returns us to a heyday that's sorely missing in today's cinema. It's as fun as musicals get.

-Jack H. Lee

The Lost Weekend/Double Indemnity/The Killers ★★★½

MIKLÓS RÓZSA (1945, 1944, 1946)

Koch International Classics 3-7375-2-H1. 9 tracks - 71:20

James Sedares and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra have quite a thing going with the concert and film music of Miklós Rózsa. This is their fifth Rózsa release, and a tempting follow-up to *El Cid* (Koch 3-7340-2-H1). Here, Patrick Russ has arranged and orchestrated generous three-part suites from three of Rózsa's most important films from the mid-1940s. (Russ was assisted by Jon Kull for *The Killers*.) The suite from *The Lost Weekend* is over 33-minutes long; the playing time for *Double Indemnity* is 26:19; and *The Killers* runs 11:13. To consider the competition, Charles Gerhardt recorded 9:46 of *The Lost Weekend* for RCA's "Classic Film Scores" series, and only 3:18 of *Double Indemnity*. Rózsa himself conducted only the *Dragnet*-anticipating Prelude to *The Killers* for Volume 2 of *Rózsa Conducts Rózsa*.

Who needs so much of these scores? I am unsure whether my slight reservations about this disc are due to the music, or simply to the way in which it has been presented. Gerhardt's suites are like good sex—they usually leave you wanting more. They have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and they have a narrative structure. In contrast, there are times on Sedares's disc when Rózsa's work sounds like a porridge of amorphous episodes. There is plenty of good music on this disc, and it is music that Gerhardt and the composer did not get to. It should not be presented as if it were a Romantic symphony, however, and that's the impression that I receive.

Having said that, the orchestral playing on this disc eclipses the work of Gerhardt's and Rózsa's orchestras, and Koch's engineering is pretty damn impressive. (The theremin work in *The Lost Weekend* is particularly noteworthy.) After *El Cid*, maybe my expectations for this CD were unreasonably high.

-Raymond Tuttle

Film Noir ★★★

William T. Stromberg cond. Brandenburg Philharmonic, Arranged by John W. Morgan
RCA 09026 68145-2 (Germany).

43 tracks - 73:54

This is the second album of John Morgan's reconstructions to appear as a German RCA release (following *The Adventures of Mark Twain/The Prince and the Pauper*) as part of the "100 Years of Film Music" series. (Sadly, no U.S. release date has been set for these diverse albums, but imports are available from the usual

RATINGS

★★★★★ Best

★★★★ Really Good

★★ Average

★ Lousy

★ Ugly Stick

To get actual, objective rating, take writer's grade and subtract one star.

soundtrack specialists.) *Film Noir* features all Warner Bros. films of the '40s: *The Maltese Falcon* (Adolph Deutsch, 1941, 8:32), *All Through the Night* (Deutsch, 1942, 15:55), *The Verdict* (Frederick Hollander, 1946, 15:35), *Dark Passage* (Franz Waxman, 1947, 14:16) and *White Heat* (Max Steiner, 1949, 19:20—tray card mistakenly reads 9:20). The suites are indexed as several individual tracks, and the sound is Dolby Surround encoded. The conducting by Stromberg well recreates the "Warner Bros." sound so prominent in the films.

The name of Adolph Deutsch should be familiar to aficionados of "classic" films, but his original music has not appeared previously on recordings. Deutsch scored many comedy and dramatic films at Warner Bros. during the '40s, and shared three Oscars for musical adaptation in '50s musicals. Deutsch was the composer on the two films that got the Bogart mystique into full swing: *High Sierra* (not recorded here) and *The Maltese Falcon*.

As many times as I have seen *The Maltese Falcon*, the film that kicked off the vintage era of film noir, I have never been particularly drawn to the music. According to the liner notes, director John Huston asked Deutsch to use music that would keep the audience puzzled by the off-kilter story. Thus Deutsch's score is subtle, and does not paint a vivid picture of what happens on the screen. However, Roy Prendergast, in the preface of his book *Film Music*, says this is the score that first attracted his attention to film music.

Deutsch's music for *All Through the Night*, another Bogart film, mixes spies, gangsters, and comedy. It is much more in the Warner style, balancing action/suspense with comic action (especially "To the Rescue" with its quotes of "Deutschland Uber Alles"). The result is lighter than usual for film noir, but enjoyable. This suite and the previous one end with the "end cast" music from the films, upbeat little pieces to put you in a good mood, no matter what the tone of the film was.

The third film is *The Verdict*, with music by Frederick Hollander, who is usually associated with urbane comedies and Marlene Dietrich. However, his music for *The Verdict* is wonderfully mysterious and dark, yet elegant too. The film itself is a fog-shrouded, Scotland Yard murder mystery

which unravels a seemingly perfect crime, and the music by itself conjures the perfect sound for such a scenario, even recalling Herrmann. This music makes me wonder what Hollander might have done with one of Universal's horror films, not that Salter and Skinner needed any help. It's a gem, not to be missed.

The fourth film is another Bogart picture, scored by Hollander's noted protégé, Franz Waxman. *Dark Passage* plays more like what one might expect of film noir music, alternately moody and turbulent, as Bogey attempts to prove himself innocent of a murder. A horn call and drums set up an exotic mood, which echoes through the rest of the score. Unlike most film noir, there is a happy ending as reflected in the finale, a dance number for Bogart and Bacall dancing their cares away.

The last film is another classic, Raoul Walsh's *White Heat*. Steiner's music broods and seethes as James Cagney's ultimate psychopathic hoodlum, Cody Jarrett, is driven toward his famous explosive end. Steiner underscores the physical and psychological violence of the situations without sentiment, setting this music apart from his more evocative scores. At times it recalls the violence of *King Kong*, relenting slightly with some bluesy

music for Jarrett's sleazy wife, and a heroic fanfare for the introduction of the good-guy G-men. The music for the final robbery builds until an abrupt finale ends the pent-up violence; but, like this bleak film, offers no relief or sympathy—quite a difference from the cheery end casts of the earlier films.

As with the other Morgan/Stromberg recordings, the suites are longer than the usual compilation album, and consequently much more satisfying. The themes have some breathing room, and appear in several of their guises. Morgan has done some arranging (more like editing) to create suites that flow as music, while retaining the spirit of the music in its original orchestrations and tempos. The booklet design is similar to the other RCA "100 Years of Film Music" discs, with extensive notes in English, German and French, and different movie stills and posters for each language section. —Tom DeMery

In Sturm und Eis ★★★

PAUL HINDEMITH (1921)

RCA 09026 68147-2 (Germany). 10 tracks - 67:16

Thus far, BMG/RCA's series commemorating the 100th anniversary of film music has been a mixed bag,

ENNIO MORRICONE:

Mondo Morricone ★★★

More Mondo Morricone ★★★

Colosseum CST 34.8057 (Germany).

Colosseum CST 34.8058 (Germany).

16 tracks - 60:52; 16 tracks - 63:32

This review is targeted at those of you who have been nibbling around the edges of the 200-pound Morricone pie and so far have liked what you've been hearing. It's nibbling that got me sucked under! The first ten or so years that I explored film music my focus was primarily on the home boys: Herrmann, Goldsmith, Bernstein, North and others. I did irregularly sample some of the strange stuff; it seemed that no matter how hard I tried to be ignorant of foreign film music I would continue to stumble into Morricone. I'd pick up a record here (*Nana* on a college field trip to D.C.) and a record there (*The Female Bunker* while slumming in the Big Apple).

The problem I had was how to make selections. Morricone has composed a lot

to cast some light on these two collections.

As marvelous as were the 1995 reissues *Ideato*, *Scritto e Diretto* and *L'Orchestra, La Voce* (I expounded upon these two SLC releases in the May '96 edition of *MSV, The Journal of the Ennio Morricone Society*) the two *Mondo* discs have them beat. As I explained to Stefan Rambow, who produced both volumes, these discs contain all the tracks I personally would have selected if I were setting out to format Ennio's sexiest and most affable and attractive themes. The *Mondo* volumes are thinly connected to the current bachelor pad/exotica fad; this is avowed by the subtitle "mindblowing film themes by Ennio Morricone from Italian cult movies (1968-1972)"—there we have the right time, late '60s/early '70s, and the right catch-words, "mindblowing" and "cult." Actually it seems "cult" is no hyperbole; Stefan has told me that the Germans have come down with Morricone fever—anything with the Maestro's name on it sells. The Europeans do pull cool stunts

Ram), and the ultimate sexual surrogate "In un Sogno il Sogno" (*The Invisible Woman*); the exquisite and exhilarating "L'ultimo" and "Belinda May" (*The Alibi*); the nine-minute celebration of feminine vitality "Come Maddeleina" (*Maddeleina*); and some fine examples of old-fashioned vampire lesbian trip-hop, such as "Allegretto per Signora" (*Forbidden Photos of a Respectable Woman*). Featured are several exciting lounge-core masterpieces, musically complex examples of sophisticated elegance: "Ritratto d'autore" (*The Invisible Woman*); "Sogni da una Radio Lontana" (*A City in Fear*); "Amore Come Dolore" and "Foto Proibite di una Signora per Bene" (*Forbidden Photos of a Respectable Woman*). There are also samples of just one of the composer's numerous exotic inventions, sensuous pop-chansons which incorporate the flavor of old-world Catholic polyphony and/or chant: "Doricamente" (*Forbidden Photos...*); "Alla Luca del Giorno" and "Terrazza Vuota" (*Love Circle*).

These discs contain all the tracks I personally would have selected if I were setting out to format Ennio's sexiest and most affable and attractive themes.

of difficult, outlandish and even downright ugly scores. I now am able to digest his most aggressive voice, but during the earlier years I only had a palate for the beautiful works and it therefore would have been nice to have known someone who could have steered me in the direction I then wanted to go. Alas, alone I had to grope in the dark, but for you allow me

like that; remember the time they made a hit single out of Barry's "We Have All the Time in the World"? On occasion they exhibit more class than we Yanks.

All that's to be found on the *Mondo* set are of the best: the delirious "The Lizard" (*Lizard in a Woman's Skin*); the ultimate erotic lullabies "La Bambola" (*Veruschka*) and "Voce Seconda" (*Black Day for the*

Just for the hell of it Stefan added three of Morricone's brawniest Schiffrinesque jolts of pure magnum force, "Svolta Definitive" and "Citta Violenta" (*The Family*), and "Svegliati e Uccidi" (*Wake and Kill aka Too Soon to Die*). If I could I'd give you a money-back guarantee on these two CDs: you have to love them.

—John Bender

ranging from banal (Hans Erdmann's wildly unimaginative score to the 1922 *Nosferatu*) to exhilarating (Steiner's *Adventures of Mark Twain* and Korngold's *The Prince and the Pauper*). Belonging to the latter category is Paul Hindemith's one surviving film score, *In Sturm und Eis*.

Hindemith, like other composers such as Paul Dessau, Hanns Eisler and Max Butting, was firmly convinced in the notion of film music—at least, he was until some years later when he finally came to the U.S. and met with Walt Disney's people. Of the scores he penned in the 1920s, only one survives—*In Sturm und Eis* (1921), written in excited enthusiasm for Arnold Fanck's latest mountain-climbing film (and without Hindemith even asking for pay!). Those familiar with Hindemith's orchestral works—*Mathis der Mahler*, *Noblissa Visione* and *Sinfonia Serena*—will find the style quite similar, though occasionally with more intimacy, partially because of the chamber orchestra employed here. While Hindemith continues to rely on beloved classical forms such as the passacaglia, the music often seems freer, entering the realms of Richard Strauss.

Dennis Russell Davies—no stranger to offbeat “classical” repertoire of this era—leads members of the German Symphony Orchestra in a thoughtful performance of this alternately tender and titanic music. In a prologue preceding Giselher Schubert's fine liner notes, Davies even makes a case for this work in the concert hall. Incidentally, those intrigued with music for Fanck's legendary mountaineering films may want to sample Edmund Meisel's far more romantic score for *Der Heilige Berg* (1926), available on the edel label. -Bill Whitaker

Four Alice Comedies ★★½,

PAUL DESSAU

RCA 09026 68144-2 (Germany). 6 tracks - 57:03

Although Paul Dessau has something of a following in the Old World, the late German composer and devoted communist remains mostly a footnote in America. His concert works are beginning to come into frequency, but recordings of his film scores are still a blue-moon occasion. My impression of Dessau is that he was most creative when someone else supplied him with a theme or motif. Then he would run rampant. His work on the moody 1944 score *House of Frankenstein* is but one example of this. In it, he took motifs by other composers at Universal and, along with Hans J. Salter, added something that made this score uniquely vibrant, far above most other film scores of the era. His Bach Variations, fanciful orchestral transcription of a Mozart string quintet, and solid 1926 symphony on Jewish musical materials are yet other examples.

Now we have the new RCA (Germany) recording of four Paul Dessau scores for Walt Disney's early-day silent cartoons, each running seven minutes. Liner notes say Dessau, then working in Germany, wrote the scores for small orchestra in the late 1920s just before they were screened at Berlin's Alhambra Theatre. As played by conductor Hans E. Zimmer (not that Hans Zimmer) and the RIAS Sinfonietta, these tart, playful cartoon scores last just long enough to be engaging, occasionally making hay of American tunes. At times, they sound like Hanns Eisler, Charles Ives or Erik Satie. The RCA disc also offers a 28-minute score to Ladislaw Starewicz's live animation film *The Magic Clock*, though the approach seems more

“serious,” alternating somewhat between Schoenberg's world and that of Hindemith.

Performances are respectfully irreverent and the liner notes prove quite readable, though they concern the films more than they do Paul Dessau and his resourceful music-making. Anyone expecting to find another Carl Stalling will be disappointed, but those anxious to hear another side of a most intriguing and talented German composer should seek the disc out. -Bill Whitaker



Another Dawn/ Escape Me Never

★★★★

ERICH WOLFGANG

KORNGOLD (1937, 1947)

Marco Polo 8.223871.

21 tracks - 61:20

This rapturous re-recording of two neglected Korngold film scores—the complete *Another Dawn*, and 7:41 ballet of *Escape Me Never*—shows not only how Korngold's richly orchestrated music should be performed, but how it should be recorded. When so many recent albums of Korngold's music have come off as turgid and muddled—Varèse's *Anthony Adverse* springs to mind—here, 32-year-old conductor William Stromberg and veteran Moscow recording engineer Edvard Shakhnazarov have stressed the wonderful transparency of Korngold's music, despite the massive orchestral forces required.

John Morgan, who restored and reconstructed these works, is quickly proving in Marco Polo's film music series that a great score doesn't necessarily accompany a great movie. His aim is an admirable one—and one too often ignored in the realm of film music re-recordings. (Thus far, Morgan has also reconstructed and overseen the recording of Hans Salter and Paul Dessau's richly atmospheric *House of Frankenstein* music and the soon-to-be-released and weirdly engaging Bernard Herrmann score to *Garden of Evil*.)

In any case, judging from the music at hand—both of them alternately lilting and surging (really ideal for ballet)—the scores for *Escape Me Never* and *Another Dawn* rate full consideration beyond their mediocre Errol Flynn films. Stromberg, Morgan and company could show some classical concert conductors a thing or two on how Korngold should be played and recorded. The full-blooded *Another Dawn* is also further proof that some film scores do deserve more or less complete recordings. Author and producer Tony Thomas rounds out the release with on-target liner notes. -Bill Whitaker



The Lost Patrol/ Virginia City/ The Beast with Five Fingers

★★★★

MAX STEINER

(1934, 1940, 1946)

Marco Polo 8.223870.

28 tracks - 76:58

A classic film with a fine cast of character actors (Victor McLaglen, Boris Karloff, Wallace Ford, and Reginald Denny), *The Lost Patrol* (1934) has the distinction of being the first purely orchestral score to be nominated for an Academy Award. During the early 1930s,

dramatic films contained little or no underscoring, primarily because studio executives didn't think that audiences would respond to music coming from an unknown source. Indeed, for most of his seven years at RKO Radio Pictures, Max Steiner wrote only a handful of complete scores, two of which—*Bird of Paradise* (1932) and *King Kong* (1933)—opened up the possibilities for dramatic underscoring in motion pictures. Overruling the wishes of director John Ford, the executives at RKO decided that *The Lost Patrol* needed the Steiner touch, too. They couldn't have made a wiser decision: with its brightly photographed scenes of disheveled, laconic soldiers, quiet, reflective moments in the vast expanse of the Mesopotamian desert, and hard-edged attack sequences, *The Lost Patrol* practically cried out for music. For his part, Steiner deftly contrasts moments of haunting, poetic serenity with rousing martial themes and blistering action sequences in which the helpless soldiers are menaced by the unseen Arabs. This recording's 31-minute suite concludes with Steiner's bracing finale, which incorporates “Auld Land Syne” into a touching musical salute to the fallen soldiers.

A follow-up of sorts to the previous year's *Dodge City*, *Virginia City* (1940) was a slam-bang, whiskey-guzzling, shoot-'em-up Civil War western that featured such Warner Bros. stock players as Errol Flynn, Miriam Hopkins, Humphrey Bogart (as a Mexican!), and Randolph Scott. It was the kind of film that Steiner apparently disliked scoring, but somehow managed to do better than just about anyone else. (Interestingly, the big-boned main theme would later turn up in 1944's *The Adventures of Mark Twain*.) Just as he did in *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and other period films, Steiner cleverly integrates various folk songs and popular melodies, giving his score a cohesive, historically accurate (if somewhat tongue-in-cheek) feel. Likewise, his gift for driving, devil-may-care action music is given ample opportunity to exert itself in this 29-minute suite. (It is, however, bizarre to hear a Russian band—the Moscow Symphony Orchestra—play such staples of Americana as “Dixie” and “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” though they do perform the pieces quite well!)

Of the 300+ films that Max Steiner scored, only a few can truly be called horror films. One of these is *The Beast with Five Fingers* (1946), a superbly photographed exercise in dementia praecox starring Peter Lorre, Robert Alda (father of Alan), Andrea King, and Victor Francen. The film boasts excellent special effects for the titular “beast” (the various shots of the disembodied hand playing the piano and scuttling behind books in the musty library are genuinely creepy), as well as a moody and inventive score by Steiner (although it was screenwriter Curt Siodmak's idea to use the left-hand version of Bach's D minor Chaconne as the film's main theme). Dominated by the eerie novachord, vibraphone, bass clarinet and contrabassoon, Steiner's score beautifully accentuates the weird, shadow-laden imagery of the crumbling Italian villa and its mysterious, overgrown grounds. There are plenty of splendid shock effects and “stingers,” too—most notably the scene in which a terrified John Alvin bolts from the house, and Lorre's climactic encounter with the hand, both of which are underscored with snarling brass trills and impressionistic piano rumblings. The 16-minute suite includes many of the score's best

moments, along with a delightful "Tarantella" for the Italian village scenes and a pleasing "Romance" for Alda and King's dalliances.

All of the music on this album was painstakingly reconstructed and restored by John Morgan, and while I applaud the enormous amount of time and effort that went into it, I must complain just a bit about the sound mix. In the liner notes, Morgan states that he attempted to replicate the "RKO sound" by using a smaller-sized orchestra for the *Lost Patrol* suite. Apparently, the recording engineers took this to mean a lower recording level as well, resulting in a hollow, somewhat distant and "concertized" sound. Fortunately, this is not the case with the other two suites, both of which are appropriately full-blooded and emphatic.

-Bill Powell

I Solisti Italiani on Cinema ★★★

I SOLISTI ITALIANI

Denon CO-18004. 27 tracks - 74:34

I Solisti Italiani is an 11-member ensemble of string players; this album features their adaptations of "Two Pieces for Strings from Henry V" (William Walton), "La Sera Fiesonala for string orchestra" (Renzo Rossellini), "Pocket Symphony for string orchestra" (Francesco Lavagnino), *Psycho* (six cues, Bernard Herrmann), "De Palma Suite" (Pino Donaggio), *Cinema Paradiso* (Ennio Morricone), "Ricordando le antiche melodie di Romeo and Juliet" (Roman Vlad), and "Fragments from the film music" (Dmitri Shostakovich). Though much of this music was composed for strings alone, some of the adaptations include piano, harpsichord, harp, piccolo and/or tambourine. If the group's number seems small, their sound is satisfying. *Psycho* does sound smaller than usual, but the arrangements are faithful, and offer some "firsts."

Performed from Bernard Herrmann's legendary *Psycho* are "Prelude," "The City," "The Swamp," "The Murder," "The Cellar" and "Discovery." "Prelude" finishes only two seconds slower than the film version, making it the fastest released recording to date. The tension of the film recording was "enhanced" by very edgy acoustics—something which no commercial recording has yet attempted. (We are still waiting to hear McNeely's rendition on Varèse.) However, this is not a mannered, concert adaptation—the spirit is close to the soundtrack, and "The Swamp" is particularly creepy.

The last cue, "Discovery," normally consists of a reprise of the "murder music" as the "psycho" is revealed, and about 10 seconds of swirling strings as the light swings back and forth, making weird shadows on Norman's mother's face. Here, however, instead of the "murder music," 33 seconds of music is performed which has been heard previously only in Herrmann's *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra*. (It begins at 4:09 in track 12 of the Koch recording.) This passage flows smoothly into the familiar "Discovery" music; the implication is that this was Herrmann's original concept.

Donaggio's "De Palma Suite" is alternately urgent and lyrical, and includes music from *Carrie*, *Body Double* and *Dressed to Kill*. Morricone's *Cinema Paradiso* is a quiet arrangement for piano and strings. Lavagnino's piece is a pleasing symphony in miniature, while Rossellini's selection has a more tragic atmosphere. The themes found within are not actually from films, but do have a cinematic sound.

The "classical" film music represented here has a substantial Shakespearean connection: Walton's *Henry V*, Roman Vlad's *Romeo and Juliet*, and some fragments by Shostakovich (eight pieces from *Five Days and Five Nights*, *The Gadfly* and *Hamlet*). The Walton selections are the familiar "Passacaglia" and "Touch Her Lips Softly and Part." Roman Vlad scored the 1954 version of *Romeo and Juliet*; in this suite he states his very lovely themes,

I Solisti Italiani on Cinema
is a fascinating confluence
of film music and concert
music. It is performed by a
traditionally "classical"
ensemble, which never loses
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and then develops them in modern harmony. The first three of Shostakovich's pieces convey lighter moods, but the last five delve into moodiness and madness.

This CD is a fascinating confluence of film music and concert music. It includes concert pieces, "classical" film music, and more commercial film music, performed by a traditionally "classical" ensemble, which never loses touch with the emotional, cinematic style of the music.

-Tom DeMary

Kismet ★★★

ROBERT WRIGHT/GEORGE "CHET" FORREST (1955)

Rhino R2 7248 2. 22 tracks - 71:45

Kismet is one of those resilient properties whose origins and manifestations date back decades. The original was a non-musical Broadway play which opened in 1911 (and was filmed twice, in 1920 and 1930). It went on to become a big MGM Technicolor film (with score and a few songs by Herbert Stothart) in 1944, a hit 1953 Broadway musical, and finally a lavish, if somewhat leaden, MGM musical in 1955. The musical version was adapted by Robert Wright and George "Chet" Forrest, a song-writing team who started out in Hollywood but whose stock-in-trade soon became adapting the works of classical composers to the Broadway stage (Grieg for "Song of Norway," Rachmaninoff for "Anya," etc.). *Kismet* was based on the themes of Russian composer Alexander Borodin, and became a Broadway smash, but by the time it hit the wide-CinemaScope screen it had somewhat played itself out and, though not without its moments, remains one of the ace musical director Vincente Minnelli's more lackluster efforts—"handsome but uninspired," as one mini-review puts it. But the lyrical score (which alternates between pseudo-operatics and Broadway belting) and its elaborate revamping by a number of MGM maestros (including a young Andre Previn) still stands as an exotic highlight of the late (and by this time declining) MGM musical oeuvre.

As with most MGM efforts, the score was given deluxe

treatment by the studio's formidable musical staff, including some of the best arranger/orchestrators in the business. Assisting conductor/arranger Previn were Conrad Salinger, Alexander Courage, Robert Franklyn, and vocal arranger Jeff Alexander who also serves as co-conductor. Additional orchestrations were provided by Arthur Morton, best-known today as Jerry Goldsmith's orchestrator and a longtime member of the 20th Century Fox musical staff. Thus besides arranging musicals, these guys also collectively worked on some of the best film scores of the era (including MGM's *Raintree County*).

Kismet was originally released by MGM Records as a 12-inch LP and a 45rpm set of three EPs, and along with Cole Porter's *Silk Stockings* (and his earlier *Kiss Me Kate*), was one of the most faithful and extended adaptations MGM had ever done of a Broadway score. The albums from these films kicked in just before the stereo age and were never released in genuine stereo on vinyl, so the Rhino reissue of *Kismet* is of two-fold interest: it's both the first complete and in stereo release. Always a highlight of these great Rhino discs are the generous segments of orchestral underscoring heard along with the vocal tracks. Especially effective in this vein is an outtake of the deleted "Rhymes Have I" and the orchestral interludes included with the song "Fate." Pure Hollywood exoticism, and the MGM mega-symphony and chorus never sounded better or more spaciously recorded than in these super-lush stereophonic tracks.

The liner notes, again as always with Rhino, are exemplary, the detailed cue-by-cue arranger credits a joy to students of the movie-musical genre, and the illustrations so choice you wish you could enjoy them enlarged to the old 12-inch LP format. *Kismet* is surely one of the best and most sonically impressive of the recent series of MGM reissues from Rhino/Turner Classic Film Music, and a must for anyone interested in the late Golden Age musical. Indeed, given Minnelli's well-known lack of enthusiasm for *Kismet*, hearing this CD is probably better than actually seeing the movie, unless of course there's the slim chance you could track down a screening in 'Scope and stereophonic sound!

-Ross Care

CAPSULES

Gone with the Wind ★★★½

MAX STEINER (1939)

Rhino R2 72269.

Disc one: 27 tracks - 74:25; disc two: 29 tracks - 73:23

This book-bound edition presents the most complete release to date of Max Steiner's *Gone with the Wind*, with sound quality great for a score of 1939. The longbox-sized format is the same as last year's stunning release of Miklós Rózsa's *Ben-Hur*. The booklet provides all the info we want to know about the making of the film, the score, and about Max Steiner. Needless to say, there is a ton of previously unreleased music.

For the younger generation, *Gone with the Wind* is a classic, both the film and music. It is totally symphonic, with a large orchestra as was standard in those days. I could tell you what is in the booklet—the details of its copious, beautiful black-and-white and color stills, and exhaustive notes—and on the 56 tracks, but that would spoil all the fun. The album is a must. I hope Rhino will go on doing MGM scores this way.

-Sijbold Tonkens

Nino Rota Film Music ★★★½

Legend CD 24 (Italy). 28 tracks - 75:45

Nino Rota is best known for his music for Fellini and for the *Godfather* films. This CD starts with the complete score for Eduardo de Filippo's 1958 *Fortunella*, previously released with less music on LP by Cometa in Italy. The funny thing is that everybody knows the theme: it is the *Godfather* theme. It was this fact that prevented Rota from being nominated for a Best Score Academy Award for *The Godfather* in 1972... although, strangely, he won the Oscar (with Carmine Coppola) for virtually the same music two years later, for *The Godfather Part II*.

La Grande Guerra (*The Great War*, 1959) is the second score on the CD, a premiere release conducted, like *Fortunella*, by Franco Ferrara, who also conducted for Morricone. Maybe it is because I am European and have been in Italy a lot, but this score evokes the atmosphere of the art-house films of the old Italian cinema.

The third film score included on this disc is also a first-time release, conducted by Rota himself: *Il Maestro di Vigevano*, a comedy directed in 1963 by Elio Petri, starring Alberto Sordi. Many thanks to Legend's Sergio Bassetti for this Rota-triptych release. -Sijbold Tonkens

And the Oscars Go To...

The English Patient ★★★★½

GABRIEL YARED

Fantasy FCD-16001-2.

27 tracks - 75:12

The world's musicians celebrate our differences, and composer Gabriel Yared had the difficult task of unifying these differences into a coherent musical statement in *The English Patient*. Yared is unfamiliar to most score aficionados, but I suspect after viewing the film and his recent, richly deserved Best Dramatic Score win at the Academy Awards, he will be more revered. Director Anthony Minghella's film plays upon notions of perception and misconception of racial and national identity, and it is a rich tapestry to which Yared weaves his brilliant compositions.

Like Patrick Doyle, Yared seems to be inspired by classical masters of the past rather than his contemporaries in the film world; there are echoes here of Vivaldi, Bach and Handel in the arrangements. The film's many beautiful moments are underscored with delicate piano, violin and harp compositions that foreshadow and underline the tragedy that befalls the lovers. There are moments in the score that will, in years, reawaken the emotions one felt upon initially viewing this masterpiece. And this is perhaps what every film composer aspires to but few ever achieve. -Oscar Benjamin

Emma ★★★★½

RACHEL PORTMAN

Miramax/Hollywood MH-62069-2.

18 tracks - 42:55

The score for *Emma* is one of Rachel Portman's best. From the excellent "Main Titles" to the eloquently romantic "Proposal," Portman delivers the goods much more so than Patrick Doyle's similar effort in last year's *Sense and Sensibility*.

The thing I like best about Rachel Portman is her innate ability to bring a sense of humor to her music, without ruining the pacing or the emotion of a scene (who can forget her driving main theme accompanying Anthony Hopkins's numerous healthy-bowel speeches in *The Road to Wellville*?). In tracks like "Sewing & Archery" and "The Coles Party," she provides the character of Emma with an almost devious theme as she sets about the business of matchmaking; the music is both subtle and clever. I often wonder what Portman would do if given the task of scoring a Woody Allen picture. (Doesn't *Used People* sound suspiciously like an Allen soundtrack, anyway?)

With its layered themes, tight orchestrations and sweeping romanticism, *Emma*'s Oscar win for Best Comedy or Musical Score was well deserved. Portman has definitely emerged in the '90s as one of film's finest composers. -Dave Buzan

The Tarantino Connection ★★★

MCA MCASD-80325. 16 tracks - 53:45

Now that the initial wave of "Tarantinomania" has passed, MCA has decided to put out *The Tarantino Connection*, full of the better songs from the films bearing his stamp. Unfortunately, if you've already purchased Tarantino soundtracks, buying this is a pointless endeavor—unless you're in it for the short excerpts of a stuttering Tarantino describing the music. These quotes show that he is a director as interested aurally in his films as visually, but I would still like to see what he could do working with a composer on an original score.

I find it unsettling that this man is revered as some sort of "film god" by the young'uns of today (e.g. people my age). Yes, he is an energetic director, but is he honestly worthy of these heaps of praise? *Pulp Fiction* and *Reservoir Dogs* had a sting that Hollywood needed to get, but I'm still waiting to see what Tarantino is all about. He's obviously a man of passion and energy, but enough with regurgitating old B-movies!

If you enjoy Tarantino, but have been holding off on buying his soundtracks, this would be a good place to start. The songs and dialogue cuts are sequenced nicely and the album plays quite well—so well that everything probably could have come out of the same movie (with the exception of *Natural Born Killers*). -Jeff Szpirglas

Serra ★★

ERIC SERRA

Virgin CDVIR56 (UK).

19 tracks - 71:57

Hearing eight of this composer's works back-to-back will make you decide whether he has arranged a choice selection that flows well, or if his scores are merely indistinguishable from one another.

Some of the music seems curiously dated by its synth effects. Serra's themes are often nicely memorable, but lost in what might be an enthusiastic band's last jam session. "Masquerade" from *Subway* is a classic example of the near miss: a squadron of gendarme are preceded by a backtracking steadicam down the Metro's access stairwell. It is pure showcase military stuff. An R&B loop is the accompaniment....

It is surprising that the album's subtitle isn't "Tribute to Luc Besson." That's really what the col-

lection is. The last three films benefit from the conducting duties of John Altman. Finishing on *GoldenEye*, to which Altman supplied the one-off memorable orchestral cue, this is probably intended to whet our appetites for *The Fifth Element*. Hey Serra, Serra—whatever will be, will be (groan).

-Paul Tonks

Lost Highway ★★★

ANGELO BADALAMENTI/VARIOUS

Nothing/Interscope/MCA IND-90090. 23 tracks - 72:09

How much disparate variety can you handle? Put yourself to the test with the latest David Lynch/Angelo Badalamenti collaboration, 23 cuts of rapid-fire difference. To demonstrate, tracks 1-5 cover: David Bowie, dialogue cuts, Nine Inch Nails, pure scatter-cushion jazz, and traditional romanza à la Angelo.

It's almost too much. But Lynch has just about the safest ears in Hollywood. To the film, a snatch of Smashing Pumpkins or Lou Reed sits just right. Four contributions from Barry Adamson wedge styles even further apart, particularly the infuriatingly catchy "Mr. Eddy's Theme 1." Badalamenti doesn't fashion any new musical cultures on this venture, sadly; perhaps his *Peaks* have been and gone.

What looks like a casually concocted song-sampler and marketing tool really is just par for the course. *Blue Velvet*, *Wild at Heart* and *Fire Walk with Me* were all fish-out-of-water albums: their importance is in the fact that this director chooses a sound, not a name. Guaranteed to contain something for everyone, *Lost Highway* is a win-win situation ultimately. How much it wins you over comes down to aural tolerance thresholds. See the movie, and prepare to navigate for yourself. -Paul Tonks

Romeo and Juliet ★★★★

Cliff Eidelman cond. Royal Scottish National Orchestra

Varèse Sarabande VSD-5752. 13 tracks - 69:52

Cliff Eidelman seems to be in competition with Joel McNeely for Varèse's collective conducting assignments. With this one, he sure lucked in. The choice of sources for Shakespearean adaptations seems to grow every other month. This particular selection is extremely well thought out, especially since it also draws from a couple of previously unavailable stage productions.

Opening with the first of these, Alex North's *Coriolanus* is a wonderful insight to the composer with a sound obviously gearing toward *Spartacus*. Walton's classic scores for *Henry V*, *Richard III*, and *Hamlet* are well represented. So too are Patrick Doyle's *Henry V* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (this was slightly too soon for his own excellent *Hamlet*).

The title play is enacted by the gorgeous Nino Rota 1968 film, as well as Prokofiev's instantly recognizable ballet. The absolute mind-blowing find here, however, is Eidelman's own specially commissioned tone poem for *The Tempest*. The storm-tossed opening is stunning. At just over 16 minutes it reminds me just how much I wanted this young composer to succeed a few years back. His talent for conducting is inarguably impressive; when he can be inspired to these heights, though, one wishes he would leave *Alien* and *Blood & Thunder* conducting offers alone. -Paul Tonks

Next Issue: The Wisdom of John Bender Returns!

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 JAGGED EDGE (JOHN BARRY, VARESE CLUB, NUMBERED)

JULIE & JULIA (MAURICE JARRE)

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 KRAFT-BENJAMIN SAMPLER (PROMO, VARIOUS)
 KRULL (JAMES HORNER, GOLD CD, LIMITED EDITION)
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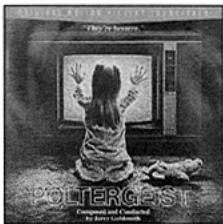
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❶ Poltergeist

JERRY GOLDSMITH

Rhino R2 72725.

13 tracks - 68:10

I was trying to list the top-five movies with Jerry Goldsmith's best scores: great films with great scores that (1) have a central brilliant idea or theme, (2) develop this into a major and coherent musical work, and (3) play a major role in the movie. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* has a great score—but the picture stinks. *Alien* is first-rate all around, but the music was sliced and diced into a bit player. *The Omen* is a great conceptual score, but the movie is more titillation than any-

expression of the cinematic supernatural. If John Barry's style is gently to reflect the emotions of the viewer, Goldsmith's here is to create them, to stay that one step ahead and be a spectacular lightshow of sound—but a display tied to the plot, and in fact speaking for it, never showing off for its own sake. This is a score where no musical sting is just a “boink”—it's a fascinating, arresting rip of sound.

Although *Poltergeist* is not the single score to remember Jerry Goldsmith by—I don't know what is—it is perhaps the ultimate expression of his genius: that special home-run that didn't just win a ballgame, or mark his 50th of a season, but went into the fourth upper-deck too. It did mark the end of an era for him—the next year movies started to go south, *Return of the Jedi* leading the

compiled by Trevor Willsmer (*Movie Collector*).

In the chain of Peckinpah disciples I can only be considered a third-string junior cadet, but dammit, I wish everybody would see this movie. It's a filmmaking masterpiece, and one of the most brilliant ethics lessons ever, all the while being the least didactic thing in the world.

Jerry Fielding's score is one of the all-time brilliant cases of a composer perfectly matching a director's vision, but in an instinctual, strange way. It's like Fielding's brain exploded, and out came Peckinpah's ideal musical match. He satisfied the director's wish for Mexican source music, the individuality you get from a folk song or single guy strumming a guitar, but also spoke of violence, foreboding, fear, joy, and adventure, churned out

Ten Thumbs-Up New Albums

New CDs I'm Happy to Have, In Roughly This Order

by Lukas Kendall

thing else. (Let's not play “list the best Goldsmith scores to terrible movies,” there are fifty of them.)

Chinatown is the best movie Jerry Goldsmith ever scored, and while his music is sparse and monothematic, it's brilliant. This tops the list. *Planet of the Apes* is number two—it has the added bonus of being a groundbreaking conceptual score for any film. Two other Franklin Schaffner pictures, *Patton* and *Papillon*, bring us to four. And although Goldsmith has done so many great scores for above-average films—*Lonely Are the Brave*, *The List of Adrian Messenger*, *The Sand Pebbles*, *Under Fire*, even *Total Recall* and *Basic Instinct* if you want to be weird—I'm starting to think *Poltergeist* is number five.

Poltergeist is Jerry Goldsmith's “Rite of Spring,” a monstrous masterpiece. Encompassed within are: (1) a lovely tonal theme for Carole Anne, (2) an equally beautiful, Debussy/Stravinsky styled whole-tone theme for “the light,” (3) tons of development and ornamentations, both traditional and avant-garde, plus (4) far-out sounds, like the rub rods and waterphone, unique to this picture (and perhaps *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*). And, (5) it's perfect for the movie, at once accessible, elaborate and understated, full of ingenious themes and sub-themes where color and melody are inseparable. Its usage in the picture even makes an interesting statement: it starts and ends around the Carole Anne character, suggesting the ways in which children are more subject than adults to the worlds of imagination and unreality.

If there is a single downside to *Poltergeist*, it is how closely derived the harmonic and orchestral language is from Stravinsky and Debussy. (There's a story, possibly apocryphal, where someone asked Goldsmith what his influences were; he replied, “Isn't it obvious?”) But he's using them for the first time in a film like this, and they make for the perfect combination of terror and beauty, a new

way, and Goldsmith began his unending experimentation (*in Under Fire*) with a more keyboard-oriented sound. And yeah, it is a shame Spielberg never called him again after this and the “Kick the Can” segment of *Twilight Zone: The Movie*.

This new album is perfection incarnated as same: a complete-score, dynamic-sound program with fine liner notes by Jon Burlingame, one of those rare discs where the complete, chronological score lends itself to a flowing album. *Poltergeist* is like a gargantuan math problem that renders itself as enjoyable as a gourmet meal. If it could talk, it would quote Automan from the short-lived '80s TV show of the same name: “On a scale from one to ten—I'm an eleven.”

in bursts of idiosyncratic rhythm, melody and color. It's at once total film music (as in the flashback cues) but totally not, as in its difference from any western score that came before, be it Tiomkin, Bernstein, Goldsmith or Morricone. Sometimes the music appears so direct, as in the charming Mexicana for the Bunch sharing a bottle of booze, but other times it is unstoppable, vague, and unsettling, as in the polyrhythmic snare drums of the unconventional “Main Title.”

A great essay by John Caps in the supplemental booklet offers a cue-by-cue breakdown of the music and concludes, “[Fielding's] scoring finds the perfect balance between joining the adventure of the Wild Bunch and preserving its own objective ironic distance. It is both the voice and the conscience of the film.” He also points out the score's disjointedness: it tends to emphasize whatever is on screen, but not in a retarded contemporary action-score way. It's more as if Fielding was afraid of misleading the jury (audience) by testifying upon anything except the evidence on hand. That contributes to the film's overall unusual feel—when I first saw it, I found it oft-putting, almost anti-climactic... ragged, but only in that I couldn't spot its intricate connections right away. But it's not intentionally accessible or inaccessible; the filmmakers dispense with any artifice except that which is instinctively their own. The violence they record is almost quaint compared to today's action films, but it's the ugliness of human behavior underneath that leaves a raw feeling.

For *Wild Bunch* fans, this new stereo CD is a must-have. Daniel Hersch's seamless digital editing and Redman's sequence make an album out of the music more so than the Screen Archives disc—which was also too sharp/fast (literally, most likely due to irregularities in the equipment Fielding used to make his personal dups). You'll want to keep the SAE disc for at least one track, “Song



❷ The Wild Bunch

JERRY FIELDING

Warner Home Video.

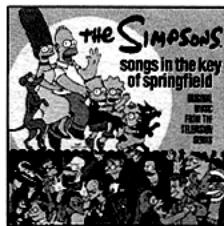
22 tracks - 75:48

I now have three CDs of Jerry Fielding's 1969 magnum opus, and you can't buy any of them in stores. The first was the mono, archival private-pressing produced by Screen Archives (SC-3-JF) on behalf of Fielding's estate, padded with several alternate takes. The second was the Japanese reissue (Warner Bros. WPCR-786) of the stereo album from 1969, part re-edited original tracks and part re-recording.

This new, nearly complete-score CD was remastered from the original stereo tracks by Nick Redman, a complicated job involving multiple takes, stems and guitar overdubs. It is presently scheduled for release only with the imminent deluxe-edition laserdisc of the film, which will also include Redman and Paul Seydor's Oscar-nominated documentary, *The Wild Bunch: An Album in Montage*, and a thick Peckinpah book/magazine

from 'The Wild Bunch,' the lone guitar heard when Pike is making the decision to go back for Angel. This was used as the end credits of Seydor and Redman's documentary; being available only in mono, it was left off the new CD. Heard for the first time is Fielding's alternate end credits, a sentimental orchestral version of "La Golondrina" which would have given the conclusion more of a "movie" feel. The Willsmer-edited Peckinpah booklet includes an account by Nick Redman of the disagreements between Peckinpah and Fielding during the production, offering the information that producer Phil Feldman wanted Lalo Schifrin—now that would have been different. Also reproduced is Peckinpah's infamous "I wanted Mexico—what did I get, Vienna?" memo.

Of this writing there are no plans to issue this CD separately, although that remains a possibility through Warner Bros. Records.



② The Simpsons

ALF CLAUSEN
Theme by Danny Elfman; Lyrics, Additional Music by Various
Rhino R2 72723.
39 tracks - 55:55

College was great in that it weaned my sorry ass off of the boob tube. However, there was one show for which I joined my smart-alec Amherst brothers and sisters in a migration to the nearest cable-connected TV set: *The Simpsons*. Rhino's new CD is perhaps the best-ever blend of dialogue, music and underscore on a soundtrack album. The laughs, as in the show, come fast and furious. My favorites: "The Amendment Song," with the same vocalist (Jack Sheldon) who did those cheesy '70s Saturday-morning spots ("There's a lot of flag burners who have got too much freedom/I wanna make it legal for policemen to beat 'em"); Mr. Burns's version of "Be My Guest," now "See My Vest"; Homer's rendition of "It Was a Very Good Beer"; and the church choir singing "In-a-Gadda-da-Vida." ("Waitaminute, this sounds like rock and/or roll...!")

Divinely inspired is the entire musical of *Planet of the Apes*, from the cheesy '80s "Dr. Zaius" to the upbeat "Chimpan A to Chimpan Z," in which the revelation that "Oh my God, I was wrong/It was Earth all along" is given the same, sunny musical treatment as the lyric just previous. In general, the show has been quick to lampoon musical theater, gleefully beating it for the dead horse that it is.

The vocal performances are top-notch, especially those by Dan Castellaneta (Homer, Grandpa Simpson, Krusty, Apu) and Phil Hartman (Troy McClure). The lyrics are consistently riotous, and series composer Alf Clausen's settings of them and his arrangements are magnificent. There are no less than a dozen Clausen variations of the catchy Danny Elfman theme, my favorite being the Australian one—Clausen didn't even attempt an Aussie version of the five-second "Gracie Films" logo, he just underscored it with a didgeridoo blat.

There isn't much underscore here, and many songs remain for a volume two—like Homer's "Mr. Plow" jingle, and his "Yummy yummy yummy, I've got love in my tummy." But Rhino, Fox and Clausen have assembled an entertaining album which is commercial without being sucky in the slightest. Clausen is excessively procedural in his liner notes, but the introductory essay by Matt Groening well states the show's belief in, and creative use of, music.

And how many TV albums can boast an original (pseudo-) Michael Jackson song? "Happy Birthday, Lisa," from the episode in which the family befriends a mental patient who sounds like the King of Pop, is a sweet, moving tune over a piano vamp and lone bucket drum, a duet with Bart (Nancy Cartwright). The vocal is credited to Kipp Lennon, who also sings "Flaming Moe's"; although Jackson did provide the speaking voice for the character, under a pseudonym, I'm told he did not perform the song due to a contractual provision with Sony. It sure sounds like him, though. As for who wrote it (it's credited to "W.A. Mozart"), I asked Clausen in an on-line chat, and he responded, "Mozart was a very prolific composer, Lukas."

④ Rosewood

JOHN WILLIAMS
Sony Classical SK 63031. 15 tracks - 49:32

After Wynton Marsalis's music was rejected, John Williams rescored John Singleton's *Rosewood*, the true story of a black town that was burned in the '20s by neighboring white-trash. The movie therefore appealed to two demographic groups: black people and film music fans. The dismissal of one of the most renowned black composers, inexperienced to film, recalls the situation with *Roots*: there, Quincy Jones was the initial composer for obvious (black) reasons, but was replaced with one of the best white composers (Gerald Fried) then available for that type of project, when the particular requirements of writing underscore mandated an experienced hand. (Marsalis has retained screen credit in *Rosewood* for various source music, a la Mark Isham in *Waterworld*.)

Fortunately, and not surprisingly, Williams's score is marvelous. Actually it runs parallel to some of the the music Fried came up with for *Roots*: Williams writes a beautiful main theme, which is Americana/spiritual and instantly identifiable as his style; it acts as a noble bookend for this profound story. He also provides his best white-male versions of gospel music, as Fried roughly sketched out Negro spirituals in his epic mini-series. But mostly Williams underscores the story as a story, independent of race, which may have been the problem with Marsalis's music, which reportedly bore some of his jazz roots.

Any time a black director makes a movie, white people go, "Uh, are we supposed to like this? Or are we supposed to show objectivity by not liking it?" In the case of *Rosewood*, critics mercilessly did the latter. I understand the problems people had with this film: you have this tale of genocide, and

in the middle is a black Clint Eastwood character—but what, white people can make dumb genre movies, but not black people? I think, black people should have every right to ruin their movies as white people. Singleton refused to be the Good Negro Documentarian, and the White Man has largely screwed him over for it—but worse. The picture was ignored.

Not that *Rosewood* is ruined. With any movie full of atrocities, be it Holocaust or lynch mobs, it's going to be rough going, and some concessions have to be made to mainstream audiences. In *Rosewood*, those concessions were at least fairly honest. It takes a pretty dumb white person not to recognize the Ving Rhames gunslinger character for the fictional audience surrogate that he is. Watching lynch-mob atrocities, it makes you boil—you want to get up there and shoot bad guys. Any mainstream genocide movie, to be palatable to more than the audience for *Shoah*, demands someone in the narrative to do it for you. At least here it was done tastefully, and I thought the Rhames character was drawn pretty realistically, with no Sam Raimi theatrics and only one impossible escape. And while the movie had some narrative closure, it left enough of it open and unhappy for stupid people to be respectful of what they just watched.

It was a joy to see this movie as scored by John Williams. People have a habit of charting a composer's work as if he was a politician, up or down in the polls. Ooh, this score was lousy, he's lost all talent, but this score was great, he's smart again. It's ridiculous. John Williams can do anything, any time. He hasn't written a score like *Rosewood* for decades—because he hasn't scored a movie like *Rosewood!* Melodically the aforementioned main theme is a long, not easily remembered melody with characteristically Williams turnarounds. Harmonically it seems part blue-note, part chromatic, but all Williams. A beautiful theme for recorder, based on two dominant-seventh (i.e. gospel) chords, underscores the relationship between Mann and the young woman, Scrappie. Like *Roots*, the movie has a backward-chronicling form; Williams captures the setting of both the black and white towns with a folk feel, and the French horn theme somehow has a non-racial cast to it: it's simply hope.

Most of Williams's underscore is brilliantly imperceptible. With many of James Horner's suspense scores like *Ransom*, the music always strikes me as imperceptible, but annoying. It's going, "hey, I'm imperceptible," but at the same time dragging out, not completing what it began—screech, screech, screech. Williams keeps the ball moving so that the music erases itself, leaving behind memories of melodies and colors that were fully realized. It's a classic case of the understated film score, the kind that well suits movies taking place in the past. After I saw the film, I couldn't remember it, but I knew it was good. It also suitably backed off the violence, allowing the film's imagery to do its work. (The production design

and look-and-feel of this film were wonderful; I don't remember the last time mud was made to feel so much like home.) And although the score was annoyingly buried in the sound mix, the sound work was spatially very impressive, with the various whizzing bullets.

Director Singleton offers his admiration of Williams in the booklet, and he's not joking—by all accounts he is a film music fan. It must be so awesome to have John Williams write music for your movie; he is, and has been since *Jaws*, the single greatest working film composer. The *Rosewood* album is a joyous reminder of what film music once was: you'd see a movie, it would have memorable music with several developed themes, and you'd buy the album as a souvenir. It had the music out of order but you didn't care, because it was nice to listen to, you'd probably never see the movie again anyway, and there would be another soundtrack next month.

⑤ Mars Attacks!

DANNY ELFMAN

Atlantic 82992-2. 19 tracks - 46:54

I'm surprised that Jeff Bond disliked this picture (see his review, p. 35), since our highly evolved Talosian minds usually agree on such things. I thought the whole point was making the human characters unfunny, unappealing dullards. The jaded industry crowd I saw the film with was howling their brains out—then again, that's probably danger-sign number one. Anyway, Tim Burton hates his audience, and so do I.

Elfman's Martian theme on album is just as ingeniously simple, catchy and driving as I remembered. Prokofiev on acid. His use of Herrmannesque sci-fi chords (major triads a tritone apart) is dead-on, and it's impressive how much of the bridge of the main title comes out of his four-pitch Martian motive. Overall the early synth, theremin patches, bongos, Indian sitars, choir and large orchestra form a listening experience full of entertaining nuggets, although the album loses its way in terms of larger structures. (Its bigger setpieces include Elfman's take on lounge music for the Lisa Marie sequences, and his attempt at patriotism, which sounds like John Williams without any short-term memory.) If Howard Shore on *Ed Wood* tended to fragment Burton's film into unrelated scenes, Elfman on *Mars Attacks!* makes too much of it run together.

I must congratulate the person who selected Slim Whitman's "Indian Love Call," a truly psychotic piece of music. Interplanetary invaders: you have been warned.

By the way, in my initial MA! review (#76), I noted how ineffective the movie's ad campaign was. Here is the approach that would have made this movie into a *Beetlejuice*-sized hit: the trailer should have been from the Martians' perspective, with them at a retro Martian blackboard explaining ("Ack ack ack") all the delicious mayhem they would cause (intercut real scenes of same). Then switch to a more normal type of trailer, cutting

together various shots, except when the announcer's deep, reverbed voice comes in, he speaks booming Martian: "Ack ack ack ack...." The point would be to showcase the movie as the *Simpsons* Halloween episode/Tim Burton movie it was, instead of a boring version of *Independence Day*.



⑥ Crash

HOWARD SHORE

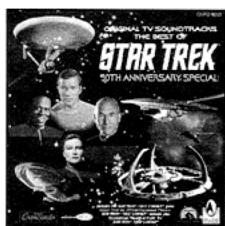
Milan 73138-35774-2.

15 tracks - 44:42

When the Howard Shore bandwagon next rolls through town, include me in! Just

when you would like to destroy all electric guitars to keep them out of the hands of Alan Silvestri and Hans Zimmer, comes this ingenious, hypnotic creation. For *Crash*, David Cronenberg's new, reviled movie about people who like to have sex in car wrecks, longtime collaborator Shore has crafted a chamber ensemble of electric guitars, selected winds, percussion and harps, the whole thing electronically manipulated after the fact. It's a use of electric guitars I've never heard before: pinpoint, mechanical, but minimalist and mesmerizing, the perfect sound for seductive machinery. It sounds enormously complicated, but is based on little more than a minor scale (slated sixth).

I have yet to see the film, but want to, since I'm such a big fan myself of sex during car crashes. I'll have more to say at that time.



⑦ The Best of Star Trek: 30th Anniversary Special

GNP/Crescendo GNPD

8053. 19 tracks - 63:51

This is a surprisingly coherent album, showcasing some of the best *Trek* work over the decades—and look, it's Jerry Fielding! Five minutes of Fielding's music to "The Trouble with Tribbles" had been recorded by Fred Steiner on one of the mid-'80s Varèse CDs, but nobody conducts Fielding like Fielding, so it's nice to have his original soundtrack. The "Tribbles" score is charming, showing how Fielding's frenetic style, so aggressive in *The Wild Bunch*, could quickly be turned to comedy. Crescendo adds seven minutes to the suite initially configured by Steiner, including two source cues unheard in the episode, and a quirky, almost Asian piece which Fielding later used in *The Nightcomers* (1972). Fielding also reused his effect for the tribbles—overdubbed trombones at twice normal speed—for the prolonged rape scene in *Straw Dogs*, which makes for an intertextual conflict indeed.

I hate it when reviewers say, "Now if only [label] will release [other score]," but I must point out how great Fielding's other *Trek* score is, "Spectre of the Gun," a precursor to his work on *The Wild Bunch*. I would love to hear its original tracks after

living with the slowed-down Label X re-recording all these years. (It is also a matter of galactic survival that I have George Duning's "Metamorphosis" and Gerald Fried's "Friday's Child.")

Also on the 30th Anniversary CD is an unreleased Ron Jones score from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the first-season "Heart of Glory." This is a terrific episode which marked the Klingons' return to *Trek*, accompanied by Jones's adaptation of Jerry Goldsmith's fifth-laden Klingon theme from the first feature. Jones mapped out a sound world which made sense for the show's slightly more sophisticated take on the future: he emphasized the wonder of journeying to the stars, took a stab at Holst-meets-Goldsmith, and his minimalist, computer-driven sequences were a perfect analog for the show's more mysterious moments. Through simple repetition, and a harmonic language of thirds and fifths, he evoked the loss of control created by living in a computer-controlled environment—and gave the listener "hooks" to follow in the best tradition of Goldsmith or Herrmann. The 15-minute "Heart of Glory" suite is already dated by late '80s electronics, but its combination of seriousness and storytelling drive was the proper musical solution to "new *Trek*."

Moving to TNG's fifth season, "The Inner Light" was one of the best-ever *Trek* shows. Picard is zapped by an alien probe and lives another life on a dying planet (how the culture decided to preserve itself, through someone else's memory). So many times in sci-fi, or any movie, some town is vaporized, and that's a plot point. In "The Inner Light," you become acquainted with an entire family on some far-away world—a culture seen through its eyes. When long-lost friends and relatives come back to life at the end, to tell Picard that he is not the ordinary guy he thinks he is, but "the chosen one" who must remember them, it's devastating. "The Inner Light" is one of the few *Trek* episodes to make dramatic on-screen use of music, in a "Ressikan flute" (i.e., pennywhistle) that Picard plays in his alternate life. Jay Chattaway wrote the lovely theme for this purpose and recorded a developed orchestral arrangement for this album. It couldn't have been better.

Rounding out the album is Dennis McCarthy: 12 minutes from an "Inner Light"-styled *Deep Space Nine* episode, "The Visitor," and 14 minutes from the swashbuckling *Voyager* installment, "Heroes and Demons." Dennis McCarthy has written more music than anyone in which not a single bar can be remembered: "The Visitor" is elegiac and lovely, but disappears the second it's over. "Heroes and Demons" is better due to its subject matter, but also makes an impression more in terms of texture than melody. McCarthy's music is like a stream of pads and transitions to and from key areas; if somebody offered you the greatest vacation in the world, but said you wouldn't be allowed to remember it, why would you do it? These two scores are good choices to represent their respective shows, but their collective 26 minutes bog down the back-end of the album.

By the way, in case you haven't been reading fan publications the last eight years, the reason the current *Star Trek* shows favor mood over melody is because the producers demand it—which is wise for a contemporary cop drama, but not a 30 year-old space series essentially told in flashback ("Captain's Log, we have just..."). For me, this approach merely exchanges artifice for boredom. (Don't forget, there are only two sanctioned moods: this is blandly pleasant, and uh-oh, this is dangerous.) As the new-*Trek* reruns play for decades to come, they will need subtext more than "What kind of radiation will stop the subspace anomaly?" to recreate a syndication phenomenon like the original series. Episodes will have to be strong and interesting the 50th time, and you get those by having shows that are visually and aurally dynamic, not diluted. Well, it's their shortsightedness.

The 30th Anniversary album does present "The Best of Both Worlds," so to speak, with informative liner notes and no less than four corporate logos on the front cover, and seven on the back. Also included are the main titles to each series, including the first release of the third-season recording of Alexander Courage's original theme.



⑧ Music for a Darkened Theatre: Film & Television Music Volume 2

DANNY ELFMAN
MCAD2-11550.
Disc 1: 26 tracks - 71:35
Disc 2: 29 tracks - 74:18

It's been exciting to watch Danny Elfman tackle new and better things. I remember when I heard *Black Beauty* for the first time ("this is Elfman?"), then *Dolores Claiborne* (ditto), seeing the main titles for *Dead Presidents* (burning money, new sounds—cool), and *Mission: Impossible* (Lalo reborn)... it's been great! The long-awaited *Music for a Darkened Theatre Volume Two* features sizable suites from *Edward Scissorhands*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *To Die For*, *Black Beauty*, *Batman Returns*, *Mission: Impossible* (with some horrendous edits), *Sommersby*, *Dead Presidents*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Freeway* (an unreleased Oliver Stone production), and various television music (*Amazing Stories*, *The Flash*, *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, the animated *Beetlejuice* theme, a Nike ad).

The only headache is *Batman Returns*, a score I've never cared for; I'm not a *Nightmare* fan either. But *Dead Presidents* is terrific, Elfman meets blaxploitation, introducing many of his current percussion samples. Except to hear *Presidents*, I don't play the *Darkened Theatre* CDs much; the suites are good Reader's Digest versions of the scores, but I've got the albums too. However, I tend not to listen to the full albums since I generally don't like Elfman's music away from the films (something about it is too potent and manic-depressive)—which is why I'm glad I have the suites!

Still, there's a lot of great music on this new compilation (well packaged by MCA, with short-

and-sweet comments from the composer), and most of my favorite scores of the past three years have been by Danny Elfman. For all the animosity some people have towards the composer, he has been incredibly influential, unique in many ways, and continues to grow. Amongst shit, he is a titan.



⑨ Maurice Jarre at the Royal Festival Hall

Milan 73138-35793-2.
9 tracks - 69:51

Maurice Jarre was the Danny Elfman of his day—except when people hated him, they didn't try to copy him too. In fact, I can't think of a single instance of anybody copying Maurice Jarre—if there is one, I'd like to hear it. Unlike some of his film-scoring brothers Jarre has been prolific in performing and recording concerts of his music. The most successful such album may still be Milan's *Maurice Jarre at Abbey Road* (which features the surprise of all surprises in great, unknown Jarre pieces: 1989's *Prancer*), but the new *Royal Festival Hall* is enjoyable too, with themes and suites from *Grand Prix*, *Witness* (the orchestral transcription of "Building the Barn"), *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Villa Rides!*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, *The Tin Drum*, *Is Paris Burning?* and *Lawrence of Arabia*. I asked around and was told these performances were somewhat erratic. Well, I liked them. *Villa Rides!* is exciting and the Asian-tinged *Year of Living Dangerously* is meditative and interesting, with ondes martenot solos by Cynthia Millar.

The album features a world premiere recording: Jarre's 20-minute Concerto for Electronic Valve Instrument (EVI) inventor Nyle Steiner, soloist). From time to time film composers have tried to write concert pieces; Jarre, whose music tends to stand alone anyway (or not, if you hate it), creates an enjoyable work by writing what he knows. The first half ("Creation" and "Evolution") is the most successful, a dreamy, melodically open work based on the phrygian mode. I found this enchanting, exactly what I hope for in a concert work by a film composer: something that takes aspects of his style and translates them to a longer form. The linking cadenzas and solos are by the EVI, a wind-controlled synthesizer whose sound is noticeably electronic but crisp, capable of a variety of textures and ranges. The third movement, "Pollution," is more percussive, and features an amusing characterization of noise pollution a la rock and rap—except this 73 year-old French composer's grumpy impression of hip-hop sounds like orchestral breakdancing. The fourth movement ("Liberation") is more in the vein of Jarre's film music, dropping the focused reflection of the opening for a more typically straight-ahead waltz.

I am always interested in Jarre's new music. This fine new album may not be the best disc for a newcomer, but die-hard and even occasional fans should look into it.

⑩ Double Indemnity/The Killers/The Lost Weekend

MIKLÓS RÓZSA.

Koch 3-7375-2-H1, 9 tracks - 71:20

As a *Double Indemnity* fan (they forced me to watch it at college) I was looking forward to this new recording by James Sedares and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. I love the main title, and the Gerhardt Classic Film Scores Rózsa disc only has the briefest version of the transition music and the love theme. Alas, I realize this is a re-recording, and I don't expect it to be in mono with scratchy sound, but what I remembered as dark, bleak and harsh in the film is here warm, fat and mushy... as if the room is too big for the ensemble, or worse, the material. The suite is too long, too: it starts with the title music, and then proceeds in no discernable order for 26 minutes.

The same can be said of *The Lost Weekend*. It would make sense that Rózsa never drank (see Tony Thomas's article, p. 17) since his idea of intoxication is more gothic horror than anything I've associated with the stuff—it does not help that the theremin has since been associated with cheesy sci-fi. (My favorite drunk scenes and music are in Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*.) The scenes of alcoholic delirium in *The Lost Weekend* were laughed at until Rózsa's music was added, but I fear today the music would get an even bigger laugh. This goes to show how one benefit to the constant presence of TV in our society is that people have grown slightly more sophisticated when it comes to watching movies. As Randy Newman told a director afraid the audience wouldn't get a particular joke, people are pretty goddamn stupid, but there's one thing they're really good at, and that's watching movies. On disc, the *Lost Weekend* suite is enjoyable as vintage Rózsa, and the theremin playing by Tamra Fine is excellent, but like *Double Indemnity* it goes on too long.

The Killers is the most successful suite on the album, with the most variety and the shortest running time. The *Dragnet*-inspiring "Main Title" leads to the beautifully reflective "Prison Stars," and the out-of-control "Exit the Killers," where the *Dragnet*-sting interrupts a boogie-woogie piano.

I took a class in film noir my first semester at Amherst College, and would jump in joy when the upcoming screening was a Rózsa film. These pictures are fascinating, but outside of Rózsa so many of their scores sound the same. *Double Indemnity* is the landmark for what Rózsa could do for a film noir; see Royal Brown's discussion of it in his book, *Overtones and Undertones* (University of California Press, 1994). So it is disappointing that I don't like this album more—Rózsa's *Background to Violence* suite on Varèse's *Lust for Life* CD is just as noir but much more varied. In the films, these scores are broken up by stretches of silence, and married with the strong sexual and dramatic undercurrents of the visuals—not so on album, where Rózsa's emphasis of motives and psychological settings, instead of action and physical ones, leads to a symphony of monotony. (But it's still great.) •

Jeff Bond Succumbs to Lucasfilm's Marketing Gimmick

And you thought you were sick of *Star Trek*. If I see that damned Taco Bell *Star Wars* commercial one more time... Fortunately for my dignity, I didn't make Lucas's foolish mistake of swearing I'd never write another thing about *Star Wars*. As it happens, I've barely written anything on it; but, as a crotchety geezer who was actually able to drive (barely) when *Star Wars* was released, I feel it my duty to clarify exactly what was so amazing about the movie when it first appeared, and why it was such a success.

It was actually the laser beams. In order to put *Star Wars* into perspective, you have to understand what nerdy science fiction fans like myself had been treated to over the years. The previous year's genre fare, both deemed worthy of special effects Oscars, were Dino De Laurentiis's *King Kong* (which couldn't even afford to shoot two different scenes of a guy in an ape suit smashing a model helicopter) and *Logan's Run*, an epic study of mall rats in the far future: special effects in this saga consisted largely of a gigantic, Jetsons-style HO train set.

In previous science fiction films, laser beams were a very big deal. Characters armed with laser pistols normally would announce their intention to fire these devices with all the ceremony of a Presidential inauguration. They would then stand rock-still, point their weapon and squint their eyes while the animated beam occupied the center of the screen. This was usually followed by polite applause. In *The Angry Red Planet*, an astronaut actually gives his laser rifle a female name and seems to carry on a fulfilling emotional relationship with it. So in *Star Wars* when stormtroopers start spraying laser beams around like uzi fire, the

home video, the seemingly bi-annual screenings on the USA Network and Sci Fi Channel... I've lost track of how many times I've seen the thing.

So like any God-fearing American, I bought my ticket in advance January 31st, and stood in line and saw ***Star Wars: Special Edition*** with another screaming audience, many of whom had not existed when the film was originally released.

George Lucas's tinkering with his classic original space fantasy has been treated as everything from a shrewd marketing gimmick to the end of civilization, but the fact is there's nothing anyone can do about it now, and the act of retooling *Star Wars* has allowed for the preservation and clean-up of the original film elements. To Lucas's credit, he's left the film largely intact, and as far as I'm concerned the additions ranged from amusing to spine-tingling in their effectiveness. Particularly stunning is a sweeping crane shot of Mos Eisley; the Millennium Falcon leaping crazily out of Docking Bay 94; a 180-degree pan of the Rebel fighter fleet journeying for the attack on the Death Star; and the climactic scene of the last remaining fighters and the Falcon arcing away from the battle station before it

explodes. There's also a great tweaking of one of the original

ing place beneath a sky at twilight. Some of these shots do change Lucas's original documentary-style footage into more Spielberg-type moments, but so much of the film is unaltered that the changes don't compromise the original vision.

What surprised me the most were the things that weren't changed. The lightsaber effects still have the same low-tech look derived from the ingenious technique of reflecting light off of rods; Ben Kenobi's lightsaber still flickers out in the duel with Darth Vader when Alec Guinness points his rod at too oblique an angle to the camera. Only a couple of shots have been modified in the cantina sequence, a scene Lucas has griped about for years. The explosions on the surface of the Death



The secret of *Star Wars'* success: laser beams.

Star still have that sparkly, out-of-scale firecracker look, but the planetary explosions have been tweaked to awe-inspiring dimensions.

Although it's debatable whether the changes actually help the movie (the added Jabba scene, while amusing, is redundant given the previous sequence with Greedo), their appeal is undeniable: if you love the *Star Wars* universe, you naturally want to see more of it. The only truly ill-advised change was the altering of the Greedo scene in which the bounty hunter fires before Han shoots him from under the table. The shot is ridiculous (Greedo's gun blast looks about as deadly as a spitball), it erases an interesting edge to the Solo character, and it all occurs so quickly that there's no chance for it to register dramatically; it's simply a moment of clumsy confusion.

Lisa Simpson: "This is a rather shameless promotion!"

Bart Simpson: "Worked on me!"

Lisa Simpson: "Me too!"

effect was stunning. I'd never seen so many laser beams in a film. These were characters who were completely unimpressed by their own technology.

The theater that was showing the film lay only a few blocks from my parents' house, so I would stroll down and watch it with a screaming audience at least once a week. I believe I got in 15 to 20 viewings over the course of the summer (on at least one occasion I watched two consecutive screenings in one evening with a friend of mine), and added a few more during the movie's re-release and subsequent showings at the university I attended in the early '80s. Then there was cable,

film's jokes as Han Solo runs after some stormtroopers only to encounter reinforcements; in the Special Edition, he blunders into a hangar bay filled with about a hundred troopers.

Not only are new elements added to many of the film's original shots, but the framing of other shots has been altered in remarkable ways: new footage of stormtroopers riding lizard-like dewbacks through the desert pans into the previously seen shot of a couple of stormtroopers standing next to Artoo and Threepio's abandoned escape pod; similarly, a daylight shot of Artoo in the box canyon is now revealed in a downward pan as tak-

The reissue of the film has been a boon to soundtrack collectors in the form of RCA's radically remastered and resequenced soundtrack album (09026-68747-2, disc one: 13 tracks, 57:35; disc two: 11 tracks, 48:16), which includes every note of the score, assembled in chronological order. It's John Williams's first truly epic work and will always be the yardstick by which overblown Hollywood orchestral scores are measured, from the rich, martial bombast of its opening titles to its unforgettable character

melodies and motifs. The sound alone would be reason enough to purchase this new release, which has such bite you can practically see the resin dust rising off the bridges of the double basses. But there's also plenty of previously unreleased music: the jaunty flute and woodwind piece that plays as Threepio and Artoo walk with Luke Skywalker into the moisture farm's "garage"; the intervening music in the sand people cue as Luke checks out

exterior packaging, is an archive of all five recorded takes of the main title, complete with flubs and slates, that provides a fascinating glimpse at the tweaks made to this famous music, particularly in its opening.

For me, the killer was hearing the "Standing By" cue, for the Rebels launching their fighters from the moon of Yavin, segue into the Death Star battle music, something I've waited for 20 years to

rhythmic motifs played against Luke's heroic theme, culminating in the hammering, Holst-like brass hits that mirror the Star Destroyer music heard at the beginning of the film, bookending the story's action.

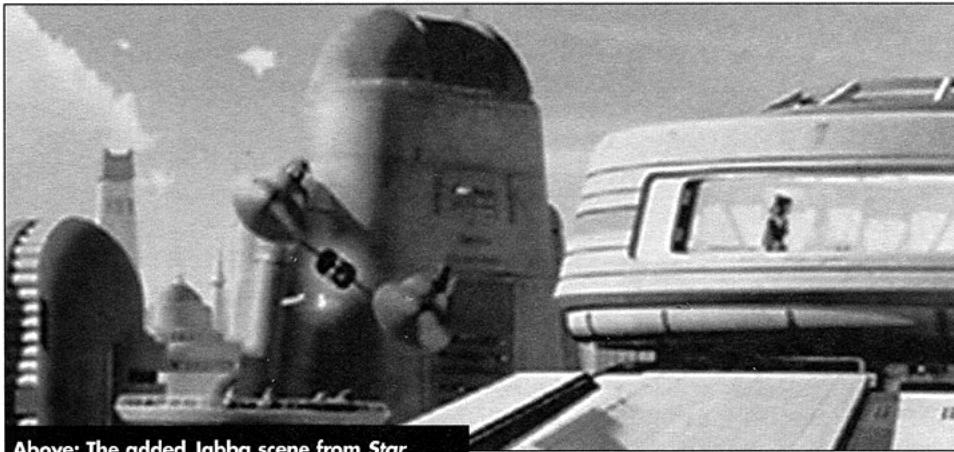
Critic Royal S. Brown has correctly pointed out that this score instigated a giant step backwards in terms of the inventiveness of the orchestral score: to this day, science fiction and adventure films tend to feature a large-scale romantic orchestral score. But that can be said about the films that followed *Star Wars* as a whole: the de riguer happy endings, emotionally adolescent heroes and black-hat villains that peopled *Star Wars* are here to this day. But there's no doubt that Williams's score was fundamentally appropriate for the film, and was one of the keys to its success with audiences.

As for *The Empire Strikes Back*... in the grand scheme of things, making this film may have been George Lucas's biggest mistake. If *Empire* hadn't been so incredibly good, people might not have noticed how incredibly bad *Return of the Jedi* was. Lucas is going to disappoint a lot of filmgoers if he can't produce something at least as good as *Empire* with his prequel movies.

Where *Star Wars* was almost like an Errol Flynn *Robin Hood* movie in terms of tone, *Empire* was the *Apocalypse Now* of space epics, opening with a thunderingly graphic and grimly realized battle, and journeying upriver through the swamps of Dagobah into the dark regions of Luke Skywalker's soul. Although it made the least amount of money of the *Star Wars* movies (truly a relative measurement), its reputation has strengthened since its 1980 release, and it is now generally regarded as the best of the series. Irvin Kershner, a low-profile veteran director primarily known for "personal" films, showed an unexpected and powerful command of the epic canvas, intensifying both the action and character threads of the first movie.

The result is one of the most intense and relentlessly paced sci-fi adventures ever, and the first film fully to embrace the high-octane, rapid-fire thrill-machine aesthetic that has been the goal of every would-be summer blockbuster since. Yet given that evil legacy, it's astonishing how textured and subtle much of *Empire* now seems compared to the paper-thin, Pavlovian plotlines of today's thrillers. Pundits seem mystified by the staggering success of Lucas's recycled space epics, but it's not that difficult to understand: they're just better movies than people are used to seeing today. *Empire* required less digital tinkering than *Star Wars*, but the additions to Bespin's Cloud City are spectacular, and add remarkably to the scope and reality of those sequences.

It does seem that every SW Special Edition will feature at least one egregious insult to the audience's intelligence, however. In *Empire's* case, it's a series of completely pointless shots that condescendingly explain exactly what Darth Vader meant when he said "Bring my shuttle" in the original cut. New footage of Vader traveling—every



Above: The added Jabba scene from *Star Wars* is enjoyable, but dramatically redundant. Below: An enhanced Bespin shot from the "Apocalypse Now of space epics."

the banthas with his macrobinoculars; the deliciously low, moody bassoon rendition of the Imperial theme as Obi-Wan explains to Luke how his father died; the sneaking pizzicato that follows the stormtrooper theme just before the Millennium Falcon blasts out of Mos Eisley; and Williams's brazen use of Bernard Herrmann's "madness" theme from *Psycho* as Luke, Han, Chewie and Obi-Wan emerge from beneath the Falcon's floorboards.

A fascinating bonus is Williams's melancholy original take on the binary sunset scene, which emphasizes Luke's feelings of depression and the awesome spectacle of the twin sunset: the repeating four-note horn motif is a musical premonition of the Dies Irae-like blast of horns that sounds as Luke stands over the burning ruins of the Lars homestead later in the film. Following 2:45 of silence after this track, and not mentioned on the

hear properly presented on a CD. I think Williams modestly described the "Last Battle" track on the original *Star Wars* album as "some rather exciting battle music." Talk about understatement. This music still gets my pulse racing after two decades, and it may be the most exciting musical cue ever written for a motion picture (for me it at least tops Prokofiev's overly comic "Battle on the Ice" from *Alexander Nevsky*). Compare Williams's approach to the climactic *Star Wars* battle to David Arnold's confounding scoring of the dogfights in *Independence Day*: the ID4 music can't be bothered to stick with a motif or a melody for more than six or seven seconds, leaving the listener with nothing to hang onto. Williams, on the other hand, trusts his material and knows that simplicity is the best way to avoid competing with the sound effects: one of the most exciting passages is a straightforward presentation of the composer's theme for Ben Kenobi (possibly the finest melody Williams ever wrote) against some percussive undercurrents from the orchestra. The final trench run gains incredible tension from the repetition of a few

step of the way—brutalizes the pacing of the final escape from Bespin, and destroys the kinetic rhythms of John Williams's "Hyperspace" cue. To whoever complained to George Lucas that they couldn't understand how Vader got back to his own Star Destroyer at the end of this sequence, I sincerely hope you're satisfied.

Williams originally scored *Empire* wall-to-wall, and RCA's Special Edition soundtrack release (09026-68747-2, disc one: 11 tracks, 62:43; disc two: 12 tracks, 61:44) allows fans to sample the complete score for the first time, featuring everything from the space-worm music unheard since the original Polydor single CD, to never-before-released cues like Williams's music for the unscored probe-droid destruction; his first take on the Imperial fleet music; the drifting flutes and throbbing, urgent low strings that accompany Luke's hallucinogenic sighting of Ben Kenobi on the surface of Hoth and Han Solo's frantic attempts to revive the frostbitten young Jedi; the atmospheric oboe melody that plays as Luke and Artoo set up camp on Dagobah; and the thrilling setting of Luke's theme over busy woodwinds as he flies his X-wing from the swamp planet to Bespin. With over two hours of music, there are plenty of other rescued tidbits scattered throughout the lengthy cues, and the stupendous fidelity makes even the cues we've long since memorized sound like we're hearing them for the first time. Since *Empire* is the dark middle act of the trilogy, Williams's agitated and complex action music tends to swallow up the more lyrical material, including the sweeping theme for Han and Leia and the gorgeous theme for Yoda, which could easily have been adapted as a Broadway love song. The complete presentation allows the quiet moments in the score to have a little more equal footing.

It would be small of me to dump on *Return of the Jedi* now that Sci-Fi Universe has done such a good job of it in their "50 Reasons Why We Hate *Return of the Jedi*" issue (February 1997). Suffice it to say that in its determination to end the saga on a happy, triumphant note, *Jedi* callously discards every interesting element of its predecessor and surrenders the final conflict of the series to

gizmos Dr. McCoy used to make Spock walk around in "Spock's Brain." Meanwhile, Han Solo is now a blundering goofball, Luke is deep in dull zen-Jedi mode, Darth Vader doesn't choke even one person... the only character who shows any life in *Jedi* is the evil Emperor: he kicks ass. I can't wait to see what they do to him in the prequels....

Jedi is probably the least augmented of the Special Edition releases, as if Lucas realized that nothing short of morphing every Ewok into a Wookiee could have saved the film—or, more pessimistically, that he already figured out how to ruin it the first time. Extending the insufferable "Lapti Nek" dance number into the lengthier "Jedi Rocks" proved slightly less annoying than I'd expected; Lucas's salute to literal-minded audience members this time is showing us what happened to the green dancing girl Oona after she falls through Jabba's trap door. We know what happened to her, already! The climactic "Victory Celebration" shots are awe-inspiring, but go by awfully fast, and I found it strange that they occurred so early in this sequence, which meant that they were underscored by the more heavily ethnic, percussive sections of Williams's newly written music. The only addition that captured some of the old magic for me was a terrific shot of a bantha herd in the desert before Jabba's sail barge comes into view; it's an indication of how much epic scope Lucas and his digital artists can put into future films... let's just hope *Jedi* isn't the blueprint for the director's future storytelling ambitions.

Like the movie itself, John Williams's score to *Return of the Jedi* represents the weakest turn of the series. Something must have happened to the great composer before he did this film, because *Jedi* shows little of the dramatic power and show-stopping action complexity of the previous films. The first big action cue, the sail barge fight, is a dumping ground of left-over material from *Star Wars*, cobbled together after Lucas quite rightly rejected Williams's low-key and distinctly unmemorable original take on the sequence.

The composer is consistently hobbled by the piecemeal nature of the film's action sequences, which rarely sustain themselves, constantly cutting back and forth to different scenes; the lack of

we're watching the same battle from that film all over again. In the meantime, Williams's overly precious, Korngold-esque Ewoks music points up the extent to which the silly forest battle undermines the drama inherent in the Rebels' final conflict with the Empire.

Nevertheless, it seems impossible for a composer of Williams's talent to produce a completely bad score, and *Jedi* has more than its share of great moments. The sail barge cue is rescued at the last minute by a brilliantly ebullient fanfare (echoed at the film's climactic destruction of the second Death Star), and Williams builds tremendous excitement by the repetition of a jaunty six-note military motif that builds through the orchestra as the Rebel fleet engages the Empire in "Into the Trap." One of my favorite pieces of previously unreleased material is the chattering trumpet motif for the first shot of the Rebel fleet, and the regal, surging military theme that plays under the briefing scene on the Mon Calamari spaceship. The triumph of the film, both dramatically and musically, is Luke's crazed attack on Darth Vader, with Williams's sublime tonal blend of chorus and orchestra bringing a spine-chilling pseudo-religious feeling to the sequence. The composer's newly written "Victory Celebration" has some of that same simple, direct feel; you can't help but get into it. But there's something strangely PC-gone-berserk about the idea of this world-music anthem underscoring the implied unification of an entire galaxy, as if our own public radio stations had been chosen to select music intended to represent countless completely alien cultures.

Although some of the new material is fascinating (and Michael Matessino's every-last-bit sequencing of this score is amazing, given its piecemeal, episodic structure), *Jedi* on disc can't compare to the pleasures offered by the first two Special Edition albums (09026-68748-2, disc one: 15 tracks, 73:16; disc two: 12 tracks, 74:47). If you love the movie, you may enjoy being led by the hand through the film's chronological structure, but you rapidly become aware just how much of this music is playing under dialogue, try-

Pundits seem mystified by the success of Lucas's recycled space epics, but it's not that difficult to understand: they're just better movies than people are used to seeing today.

a bunch of poorly realized teddy bears. Who's the Other? "Oh, that's your sister, Leia." Yoda? Dead guy. Boba Fett? Burp! Luke/Leia/Han romance triangle? "Oh, that's your sister, Leia." One of the keys to the disintegration of the series is in the lobotomizing of the Leia character: in *Star Wars* she's a feisty broad who thinks her rescuers are a couple of well-meaning idiots. In *Empire* she's reduced to a hand-wringing love interest. *Jedi* sets the tone early by sticking her in an iron bikini and placing a leash around her neck; for all her emoting, they might as well have installed one of those

focus leaves Williams without the use of many of his central themes. The *Star Wars* Death Star battle was clearly Luke's story, with Ben Kenobi's theme laying the groundwork as the battle for Obi-Wan's ideals is joined, and Luke's heroic theme eventually emerging out of the action material as the youth finds the inner strength necessary to complete his mission. The sprawling final battles of *Jedi* do have a goal, but precious little dramatic focus: the space battle music consequently falls back rather meaninglessly on the original *Star Wars* cues, which only serves to emphasize that

ing to keep up the illusion that events of dramatic importance are transpiring.

Mention should be made of the Special Edition CDs' classy packaging, with their super-deluxe, beautifully printed hardcover booklets and slipcovers, although the gaudy laser-etched CDs themselves fly in the face of the muted, dignified approach to the rest of the package. I wish the photo quality in the *Jedi* booklet was a little better; the incorporation of the newly written music seems to have squeezed the album's production time, but it's still a great-looking collectible.

Still More Jeff Bond...

Rhino's long-awaited release of the complete score to **Poltergeist** (Rhino R2 72725, 13 tracks, 68:12), Jerry Goldsmith's spectacular ghost epic from 1982, is a boon to fans of Goldsmith and film music in general.

Assembled by the *Star Wars Trilogy* team of Nick Redman and Michael Matessino from the original masters, the CD opens with the national anthem as it plays over the television set that is soon to be Carol Anne Freeling's doorway into the spiritual realm: it's a blow-by-blow, chronological recreation of the original soundtrack, from the eerie, almost mournful opening woodwind theme that plays beneath Carol Anne's initial conversation with the "TV People" (and later surfaces with bubbling malevolence at the beginning of "Twisted Abduction") to the final, all-stops-pulled-out "Escape from Suburbia."

Every note is here, and the added material lets the listener trace Goldsmith's motifs from their subtle introductions to the full-on orchestral violence with which most are eventually treated as the film's terror-quotient increases. The unused "The Tree" introduces a nervous, impressionistic figure in woodwinds that forms the basis for much of the more frenzied music later, but the standout addition is the agitated, deliciously malevolent

Another new highlight is the "It Knows What Scares You" cue that precedes the pseudo-religious churning of "Rebirth," as Zelda Rubenstein's psychic verbally maps out the territory of the other side with the help of Goldsmith's music. The V'Ger-like spectral chords and the five-note, supernatural "love theme" perfectly describe the gorgeous wonder of the unknown, while the horribly low, rumbling textures underscore Rubenstein's description of "The Beast."

What's remarkable is that these ideas are never physically presented on-screen (and when *Poltergeist II* attempted to do so, the results were laughably prosaic): Goldsmith's music characterizes these vital plot elements almost singlehandedly, creating a terrifyingly organic unseen world. The dark, eight-note piano figure that slithers out of the low-end of the keys as the characters begin to rig the house's interdimensional trapdoors with ropes is like some portentous knocking from the other side; the blend of eerie polytonal strings and voices that follows, leading to a percussive reshuffling of the piano motif mixed with flutes as Rubenstein prepares to open the bedroom door, is one of the most suspenseful moments in horror movie history. Goldsmith's music is like quicksand sliding out from under your feet, dragging you into the setting against your will.

Poltergeist is a superb sampler of Goldsmith techniques, ranging from the pastoral, Disneyesque business of the opening "Neighborhood" cue to some of the most brutal attack ostinatos in the composer's repertory. Along the way there are stylistic influences of everything from *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, with its undulating V'Ger chords,

to the bass slide whistle of *Planet of the Apes*. The cues from the original LP are classic showpieces: the hair-raising "Night Visitor," with its eerily stretched-out, supernatural waltz heralding a flight of luminescent ghosts descending the Freeling house's central staircase; "Twisted Abduction," with its dynamic, jagged brass fanfare and spine-chilling choral work; and the hellish assaults that are "Night of the Beast" and "Escape from Suburbia"—all of these are augmented by previously unreleased material, giving the score a scope and complexity only hinted at before.

So what's not to love? Well, some worthies on the Internet were confused and frightened by the production notes' description of the original recording as "analog," when the original LP boasted that it was a "digital recording." [I haven't been

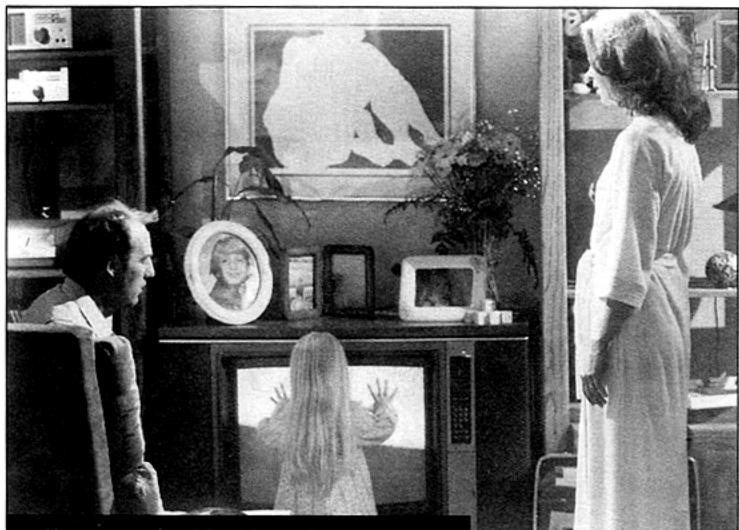
able to discover the details behind this, but consider this stunning logic: the original LP was in fact analog, because all LPs are analog! -LK] From all accounts the producers worked from the best available multi-track sources, and those happened to be analog. Other complaints included the presence of noise made by the musicians in the quieter passages (translation: the recording is too good!) and that the new release isn't exactly like the LP (i.e., there's more music! Help! It's too complete!). Children of the Internet: For this you shall drink bitter waters.

One of the movies unexpectedly buried alive by the *Star Wars* juggernaut was Roger Donaldson's **Dante's Peak**, the first of 1997's dueling volcano movies. James Newton Howard associate John Frizzell got his big break with this picture after working on the epic *Beavis and Butt-Head* movie, but evidently he couldn't be trusted to write his own theme, so Howard is credited with that end of the creative process. Howard's contribution is somewhat in the mode of his *Fugitive* theme... kind of like if Harrison Ford had the implied might and threat of a digitally-rendered killer volcano.

Since the main-title cue on the Varèse Sarabande CD (VSD-5793, 10 tracks, 30:00) is over five minutes in length, this leads to a little conceptual confusion as to who did what. After the introduction of the *Fugitive*-type melody, the cue rumbles on with a lot of angry stomping and bellowing that put me so much in mind of an old Japanese monster movie that it made me realize that this is exactly what movies like *Twister*, *Independence Day* and *Volcano* are: *Godzilla* movies without *Godzilla* (until Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin actually release *Godzilla*, that is). As Americans we crave the destruction of buildings and miniature tanks, but we can't handle the mind-blowing cultural phenomenon that is *Godzilla*, so we have to mask him behind CGI tornado special effects. That's my theory, anyway.

After watching *Twister* I swore never again to pay money to watch actors try to interact with meteorological or geological effects, so I gave *Dante's Peak* a miss (although that *Volcano* movie with Tommy Lee Jones looks too good to pass up). But John Frizzell's music rarely seems like anything more than a well-orchestrated and performed action score. I'm a sucker for the kind of Goldsmith-inspired driving ostinato approach of cues like "Trapped in the Crater," but most of this sounds so much like *The Fugitive* that I begin to wonder what the value of letting a John Frizzell out on his own really is. Is America's appetite for James Newton Howard action scores so ravenous that we need two James Newton Howards? [No, but movie studios' appetites are. -LK]

Scoring these kinds of pictures is doubly difficult because there is rarely any central idea that a composer can get his teeth into. The biggest conceit is to characterize the volcano, which results in some mildly dissonant suspense cues but rarely



It's here... Jerry Goldsmith's *Poltergeist* on CD.

"The Clown," with its spooky, delicate xylophones and mischievous woodwind figure, climaxing in a virtuoso low-end piano run as the little Freeling boy tries to throw some clothes over the hideous face of his toy clown (a big pat on the back to the parental instincts that produced that gift). Almost as fun is "They're Here," with its snarling solo trombone heralding the invasion of the Freeling house by evil spirits.

any genuinely imaginative orchestral effects. The exceptions are the "Sinking on Acid Lake" and "Stuck in the Lava" cues (other inspiring titles include "Escaping the Burning House," "Trapped in the Crater" and "Fake Horrified Reactions to the CGI Effects") which are entertainingly agitated, with a lot of frenzied, low-end piano and howling trombone slurs. The whole thing wraps up with an all-out celebration of Americana called "The Rescue," that might have been written for something genuinely moving, but you know it just underscores the protagonists' final hug as they're airlifted away from the CGI lava flows. This is the problem disaster movies have always had: they're about victims, not heroes, and watching someone endure and survive isn't as interesting as watching someone in an active role. In a monster movie someone can slay the dragon, but you can't kill a tornado or a volcano, you can only run away.

First there were movies based on novels and stage plays, then movies based on other movies, and finally movies based on old TV shows. Now we take the next step down on the evolutionary ladder to one based on a controversial series of bubble-gum cards.

Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks!* is virtually D.O.A. despite a wonderful title sequence of thousands of silver flying saucers heading toward Earth; the problem is not the funny CGI Martians, who do supply around 30 minutes of entertainment—it's Burton's human characters, who make the first 45 minutes of the movie so flat, dull and desperate that the Martian onslaught barely nudged me out of the funk I'd fallen into. Apart from Sarah Jessica Parker's flirtatious fashion reporter and Pierce Brosnan's startling resemblance to Fred MacMurray, there isn't a single funny moment supplied by this stellar cast—they're less amusing than the overpaid inhabitants of any Irwin Allen movie, and despite everyone's attitude-copping there's no satiric point to their characters.

The thought process seems to have ended with "We'll get Jack Nicholson to play the President!" Big deal. Why is that funny? The cast is left adrift in a comic purgatory, forever winding themselves up to deliver punchlines that never arrive. And that makes the Itchy-and-Scratchy splatter humor of the invading Martians pointless, too. The human characters are flat and annoying, but they haven't been satirically skewered enough for us to delight in their comeuppance at the hands of the alien invaders. Congress is destroyed before our eyes; well, that's hilarious because we all hate Congress, right? But what's so funny and despicable about this fictional Congress that will make us laugh when they get fried? It's not the element of surprise, because anyone who watches TV has seen the Martians destroy Congress around a hundred times in the movie's ad campaign.

Burton's visual genius is still in evidence: there's a sequence of a Martian robot chasing a pickup truck down a dark country road that's a Chuck Jones cartoon come to terrifying, three-dimensional life, and the Martian performers themselves are hilariously malicious, particularly when one of their flying saucers takes care to adjust the trajectory of a stricken Washington Monument so that it will fall on a troupe of fleeing boy scouts. Burton brings a surreal creepiness to scenes of his girlfriend as an outrageously buxom Martian disguised under the ultimate beehive hairdo, and the director's macabre playfulness reaches sublime heights when he stages a romantic encounter between two decapitated heads. But these gems come along awfully late in the narrative; apart from the interruption of a Tom Jones stage show, every scene in Las Vegas (accounting for roughly half the film's length) could have been trashed: Nicholson, Danny DeVito and Annette Benning have never contributed less to a film. And Nicholson's President is another complete waste of time; this actor has gone from Mr. Hip to a profound on-screen liability in record time.

Ditto Rod Steiger in a pathetic attempt to recapture the magic of George C. Scott's brilliant Buck Turgidson character from *Dr. Strangelove*. It takes some major balls to invite comparisons to what might be the greatest screen satire of all time, and you'd damned well be funny if you're going to attempt it.

As for Danny Elfman's score, it shares with the special effects the honor being the only elements in the movie that work. His title theme is a brilliantly single-minded march, kind of a "March of the Psychotic Tin Soldiers," but the album (Atlantic 82992-2, 19 tracks, 46:54) focuses on the Martian threat, excising a lot of Elfman's ingeniously dizzy patriotic riffs to the point that the whole thing winds up getting monotonous, much

to amaze me that this composer (who has probably done more to preserve the integrity of the orchestral score than anyone else working right now) still receives so little respect from his peers. To this day some old-guard composers still don't believe he writes his own music, and an Oscar nomination might be nice one of these days. For my money, *Mission: Impossible* was the best score of last year, action movie or no.

Varèse Sarabande's companion piece to the interesting *Alien Trilogy* album is the even more ambitious *Romeo and Juliet* (Cliff Eidelman, conductor, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, VSD-5752, 13 tracks, 69:52), a groundbreaking collection of music from stage and film Shakespeare adaptations. This gathers some of the usual wonderful subjects (William Walton's sublime opening to Olivier's *Henry V* and Patrick Doyle's almost equally thrilling St. Crispin's Day cue from Kenneth Branagh's version of same; Doyle's exultant opening to *Much Ado About Nothing*; a previously unheard cue from Nino Rota's sweetly romantic *Romeo and Juliet*; the heavy tread of Rózsa's grim funeral march for *Julius Caesar*), and couples them with some fascinating world-premiere recordings of Alex North stage compositions for *Coriolanus* and *Richard III* (which employs a fanfare later used in *Spartacus*, and opens similarly to the composer's Strauss-inspired title from *2001*); Walton's imposing prelude to *Richard III*; Shostakovich's take on *Hamlet*, which combines a satirically energetic dance with some surprisingly tough and exciting dueling music; and Prokofiev's sprightly and delicate characterization of the young Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet*, along with his swaggering antagonistic theme for the feuding Montagues and Capulets.

Collectors might think that this is supposed to be good for them, but this is a hell of a lot more



like the film's endless destruction sequences. Elfman's more serious-minded scores have been so convincing of late that it's almost disappointing hearing him return to the old playful strangeness of Tim Burton's world. His score is perfect for the movie, and his trademark choral effects during the initial "First Contact" scene with the Martians evokes a kind of Gumby-like optimistic trust that I don't think anyone else could have conjured up.

Mars Attacks! is as well-crafted and ingenious as anything else Elfman has written, and it continues

full-blooded and melodically rich than any current score album you're going to buy. The sound and the performance by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (a group of players I think we're all going to become very attached to in the next year or so) is superb and expressive; Cliff Eidelman's conducting is right on the money.

Continuing a fascinating innovation begun with Joel McNeely's *Shadows of the Empire* CD, Varèse commissioned Eidelman to compose a 16-minute tone poem for *The Tempest* that's one of the album's

highlights. Classically developed but with a lot of the immediacy and dramatic power you expect from a film score, Eidelman's work has some of that enchanted feeling of Ravel that Goldsmith evoked in his *Legend* score, and there's even a hint of *The Blue Max* in the resolution of his central twelve-note theme. The piece is developed with a kinetic scherzo and some expansive and powerful brass material for the wizard Prospero, and the whole thing is enough to make me wish Hollywood composers would just quit writing music for all these idiotic movies and take on projects like this where they have more than three weeks to come up with some music, and can write about something with a little more lasting meaning than CGI tornadoes.



Even the siren call of Jamie Lee Curtis's cleavage couldn't get me into the theater to watch **Fierce Creatures** (Varèse Sarabande VSD-5792, 13 tracks, 29:23) but I did enjoy this pleasant, low-key little album. It's probably **Jerry Goldsmith's** most engaging jazz-oriented score, coming off as something akin to Vince Guaraldi's charming old Charlie Brown television soundtracks with an ambling, droll, low piano



An employee at the Hollywood post office.

motif that strolls through many sequences. The effect also recalls Goldsmith's ancient documentary score "General with the Cockeyed I.D.," blending a tongue-in-cheek chamber ensemble with gently pulsing pastoral cues. Goldsmith has had a tendency to write "funny" music in many of the comedies he's done, which often makes these particular scores less enjoyable as pure listening,

but *Fierce Creatures* works by just creating an overall, good-natured ambiance and allowing the comedy to work on its own (although according to most reviews of the movie, maybe Goldsmith should have written some funny music). It's always a bad sign when it takes two directors to finish a movie (although at least *Fierce Creatures* didn't call on Alan Smithee to finish the film); *A Fish Called Wanda* was directed with remarkable verve by Ealing comedy veteran Charles Crichton, who was in his 90s when he made the movie. Although I admire Fred Schepisi's loyalty to Goldsmith, I wish he'd make a good movie for the composer to score someday; so far *Six Degrees of Separation* has been their masterwork.

Considering their stingy approach to new-movie soundtrack length, Varèse's lavish treatment of **Joe Lo Duca's Xena: Warrior Princess** television music (VSD-5750, 30 tracks, 65:56) is surprising. [While the show is scored here in the States, I can only assume it is done non-union, and hence not subject to re-use fees. -LK] Lo Duca's *Hercules* music was unsatisfying film-score junk food, way too dependent on its various action/fantasy score inspirations, from Polledouris's *Conan* to Rosenthal's *Clash of the Titans*, just about anything by Horner, Herrmann's Harryhausen scores, you name it. The best part of the album was Lo Duca's rousing ethnic treatment of "Hercules and the Amazon Women," and *Xena* quite appropriately mines that vein thoroughly.

It's no surprise why *Xena* has begun to eclipse *Hercules* in popularity: *Xena* simply kicks Hercules' ass! As a formerly evil character who's turned to the side of good, she has far more leeway for behavior than Hercules, who's just a completely nice guy who happens to be half-god. Lucy Lawless can also act circles around Hercules' Kevin Sorbo (and she was hilarious playing three roles in an episode last winter); her character has a no-nonsense vigilante streak that seems to inspire much better work from Lo Duca than Hercules does. His *Xena* title theme is a strange mix of Celtic-influenced instrumentation and chanting song, and a down-and-dirty eight-note brass theme that's marvelously adaptable, ably underscoring the most ferocious action sequences while hinting at the depth of Xena's psychological scars when played in repose with smooth horns or low strings. There's even a moving bit of romantic pathos in the cue "Goodbye"; even though they're both action shows, *Xena* seems to offer a wider canvas of emotions (while hitting its satiric targets more adeptly than its predecessor). Lo Duca's treatment of the show's various monsters and demons hews more closely to the frenetic horror-movie orchestrations of his *Evil Dead* scores than the derivative riffs of the *Hercules* TV movie scores (although "The Oracle" begins to stray into Bernard Herrmann territory for a bit), and there's quite a bit of enjoyable sound and fury, broken up here and there by some peculiar pop-oriented ethnic/primitive songs and dances. Lo Duca's occa-

sional use of electronics (which probably account for a much higher percentage of the scoring than is represented here) can sound cheesy, with synths bleating out melodies that would have been just as well played by oboes or clarinets. But Lo Duca's orchestral effects are up to movie quality in most of the bigger action and dramatic cues, making this nearly the equal of some of the better film scores of the past year (which admittedly isn't saying much).

What to say about the new set of **Television's Greatest Hits**, except that executive producer Steve Gottlieb deserves some kind of award (and probably has already gotten one) for putting together these lengthy, exhaustive, hilarious and scarily nostalgic collections. Without further ado:

Volume 4, Black & White Classics (TNT 1600-2, 65 tracks, 66:21) was the most frightening journey of them all, reaching deeply into a childhood past I didn't realize I remembered so well. Although some of the cartoon themes have already been presented on Rhino's Hanna-Barbera collections, chilling ancestral memories like the pre-Kevin Sorbo *Mighty Hercules* song ("Softness in his eyes/Iron in his thighs/He's the mighty, Hercules!"), the theme to Art Clokey's surreal *Gumby* show and the Don Adams-voiced *Tennessee Tuxedo* animated adventures forced me to stop and catch my breath more than once. Equally soul-shaking were the afternoon sitcom reruns like *Make Room for Daddy*, *Hazel* and *The Real McCoys*, plus the hysterical Beach Boys number for *Karen* ("She sets her hair with great precision/It's her favorite indoor sport") and the terrifyingly sad, whistled theme to *Lassie*. Then there's the pre-Michael Eisner propaganda sing-along for Walt Disney's *Wonderful World of Color*, and the oft-perverted lyrics to the 1954 *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*.

At this point most of television's westerns were represented by utterly ridiculous songs, including the hilariously pious salute to *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, *The Lawman* ("The long man came with his son/There was a job to be done"), *26 Men* ("26 men who saddled up to answer duty's call!"), *Colt .45* ("There was a gun that ruled the West/There was a man among the best"), and so on—these all sound exactly the same, but they're so silly that they offer guaranteed laughs and make the poke-along instrumental theme to *Gunsmoke* sound like something Bartók might have written. Big-time film composers get represented by Jerry Goldsmith's lyrical pomp-and-circumstance theme to *Dr. Kildare*, the glittering patriotism of Richard Rodgers's *Victory at Sea*, Victor Young's silky piano-and-strings theme to *Medic*, John Williams' high-tension *Checkmate* theme, George Duning's *Tightrope!*, Henry Mancini's familiar, swinging *Mr. Lucky* and Elmer Bernstein's *Johnny Staccato*. Jazz musicians weigh in frequently, from Pete Rugolo's driving *Fugitive* theme and Duke Ellington's *Asphalt Jungle* to Count Basie's *Police Squad*-inspir-

ing *M Squad*; standouts include Nelson Riddle's doom-laden *The Untouchables* and Herschel Burke Gilbert's hilariously campy *Burke's Law*.

Volume 5, In Living Color (TNT 1700-2, 65 tracks, 68:10) features a bevy of shows I can actually consciously recall from my childhood and teenaged years, from Barry Gray's British Invasion takeoff themes for the sci-fi puppet shows *Stingray* and *Thunderbirds* to numerous Hanna-Barbera cartoons (including the immortal, revved-up *Superchicken* theme by Sheldon Allman and Stan Worth), right into the completely bizarre, hallucinogenic world of Sid and Marty Krofft, whose shows often required several minutes for their theme songs to set up the bizarre premises for sugar-hyped kiddies every week. The sitcom themes for this era are a lot catchier, from Dave Grusin's charming *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir* to Dominic Frontiere's frothy *The Flying Nun* and Frank DeVol's sugary harpsichord theme to *Family Affair*, which musically assured viewers each week that their minds would not be unnecessarily taxed by the approaching family comedy. The song "Seattle" from *Here Come the Brides* played one year with lyrics by Ernie Sheldon sung by the New Establishment, although the other season just featured the underlying music by Hugo Montenegro... I guess the New Establishment must have asked for more money.

For the novelty-minded there are game show themes galore, from *The Dating Game* to *Let's Make a Deal*, plus morose afternoon soap themes that go a long way towards explaining soaring rates of alcoholism among housewives in the '60s. A real forgotten treasure is the theme to the obscure *Skippy, the Bush Kangaroo* series, an Aussie import that predated Paul Hogan by over a decade. Some of the best themes come from the '60s westerns, which shook off the annoying song titles of the '50s for some beautiful melodies like David Rose's *The High Chaparral*, George Duning's moving *The Big Valley*, Maurice Jarre's kick-ass theme to *Cimarron Strip* (which accompanied a great helicopter shot of Stuart Whitman galloping along a western trail every week) and Ennio Morricone's characteristic *The Men from Shiloh*. Detective series concentrate on the offbeat, with Dave Grusin's swaggering *It Takes a Thief*, Patrick Williams's quirky theme to Bill Bixby's short-lived *The Magician*, Morton Stevens's *Police Woman* and John C. Parker's precursor to John Williams's *Jabba the Hutt* theme, the tuba-schtick title piece to William Conrad's obese detective show *Cannon*.

One of the great thrills of this collection for me was Alexander Courage's dynamic and involving theme to the old Carl Betz lawyer show *Judd for the Defense*: this is the first TV theme I can remember getting hooked on as a kid, and long after the show bit the dust I still found this theme running around in my head. Film composer usual suspects here include Goldsmith's rock-influenced *Police Story* theme and Dave Grusin's arrangement of Goldsmith's "Man from UNCLE" theme for the Stephanie Powers vehicle *The Girl from UNCLE*,

albeit missing the harpsichord. There's also Jerry Fielding's fascinatingly lyrical, unpredictable opening piece from *The Bionic Woman*, and from the Irwin Allen stable, John Williams's themes to *Land of the Giants* and the first season of *Lost in Space*. Other genre favorites include Oliver Nelson's timpani driven theme for *The Six Million Dollar Man*, Gil Mellé's kaleidoscopic theme to Rod Serling's *Night Gallery* and his driving theme to *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, which was actually lifted from the composer's score to Gene Roddenberry's *Questor* pilot so star Darren McGavin could whistle the melody over the opening credits. Plus you get the *Olympic Fanfare*, and *Masterpiece Theatre*, as well as classic '60s pop crap like *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*, *Happening '68* and Tom Jones's "It's Not Unusual" song (featured in *Mars Attacks!*) from his *This Is Tom Jones* variety show.

Volume 6, Remote Control (TNT 1800-2, 65 tracks, 74:33) was the least rewarding for me personally, as it languished in the largely hideous decade of the '80s, with tons and tons of lousy, annoying sitcom themes to horrendous shows like *Fish*, *What's Happening?*, *Different Strokes*, *Mr. Belvedere*, *Growing Pains*, *Charles In Charge*, *Silver Spoons*, *Webster*, *Who's the Boss*, 227, *Mork and Mindy*... the list goes on and on. However, my wife found this CD a godsend for exactly the same reasons, because these are the reruns she grew up on. For soundtrack fans, the attractions are Ira Newborn's *Police Squad!* theme, Laurence Rosenthal's gushing *Fantasy Island* music, Bill Conti's faux-sophisticated themes for *Falcon Crest* and *The Colbys* (the rich family made of cheese!), Joe Harnell's *Incredible Hulk* theme, Dennis McCarthy's driving V: *The Series*, Ron Grainer's classic, wailing Moog theme to *Dr. Who* and Gerald Fried's great theme to the *Roots* miniseries. There's also Vangelis's hypnotic "Heaven and Hell" from Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* series, while fans of irony will probably dig the theme to *The Benny Hill Show*, *The People's Court*, *Family Feud*, *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, *Highway to Heaven*, *B.J. and the Bear*, *CHiPs* and *Knight Rider*.

Volume 7, Cable Ready (TNT 1900-2, 65 tracks, 72:03) starts out promisingly with the theme from *The Simpsons* and *Ren and Stimpy*, sinks into a morass of kiddie-show themes from *Clarissa Explains It All* to *Barney and Friends*, *Where in the Hell Is Carmen Sandiego?* and *Saved by the Bell*, stumbles even farther with sitcoms like *Major Dad*, *My Two Dads*, *Blossom*, *Empty Nest* and *Family Matters* (to name but a few), then redeems itself with the ultimate TV theme, *It's Garry Shandling's Show*. ("We're almost at the part/Where I begin to whistle/How do you like the theme to Garry's show?") Most of the current television offerings are here, and it was nice to have Jay Gruska's chipper theme to *Lois and Clark* and the seminal HBO Feature Presentation anthem; too bad the David Letterman theme has to be the watered-down version currently playing on his CBS show. There are a lot of popular tunes contained here: *Roseanne*, *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, *Seinfeld*, *Mad About You*, *The*

Single Guy (which owes a big debt to Alan Silvestri's *Soapdish*), *Murphy Brown*, *Wings*, *Thirtysomething*, *My So-Called Life*, *90210*, *Melrose Place* (my prayers have been answered!), *Quantum Leap*, etc. The one non-soundtrack oriented piece I was happy to have was the *Kids in the Hall* theme by Shadowy Men from a Shadowy Planet. I've also always liked Stewart Copland's *Equalizer* theme, which he stubbornly refused to reproduce accu-



rately on his *Equalizer* album of a few years ago. There's also Dave Kurtz and Ken Johnson's *Alien Nation* theme, but a lot of material like that, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Twin Peaks*, *Tales from the Crypt*, etc. are available on other albums. Still, I'm blaming the '90s, not TNT Records.

Silva Screen once again raises the specter of the Orchestra of Prague with three new jumbo, genre-oriented collections which are designed to capitalize on current television shows... but in one case the sands of time have buried the primary tie-in. The first set is **The Cult Files** (Silva Screen SSD 1066, disc one: 20 tracks, 63:30; disc two: 14 tracks, 56:10), two CDs of re-recorded television themes from various genre shows and, oddly, a lot of cop and detective show themes left over from Silva's *Atomic Era TV Themes* album. Although title pieces from shows like *The X-Files*, *Star Trek*, *The Avengers* and *The Saint* certainly fill the bill, the definition of "cult show" gets stretched a bit when we begin to encounter things like Quincy Jones's theme to *Ironsides*. Although I'd like to have the wheelchair concession at an *Ironsides* convention, somehow I don't think the old Raymond Burr private-eye series has generated that much of a fan following. This album has the same problem the *Atomic TV Themes* CD had: namely, that after arranging a perfectly adequate reproduction of the original television themes, the producers felt it necessary to pad these tunes out to an extra minute or so with some improvisational riffing that just sucks them of their tight, kinetic power. I realize that in many cases these pieces were extended by their original composers, but it's very rare when one of these themes stands up to extended development. Usually it's just like improv night at your local jazz club. In particular,

Mark Snow's *X-Files* theme wears out its welcome at three and a half minutes. At the other end of the spectrum is Ron Grainer's *Prisoner* theme, which cleverly incorporates the show's opening and ending theme pieces with its signature "I'm still in the Village" music that opened every episode. Of the cues that seem more unique to this collection, Edwin Astley's *The Saint* (newly brutalized by the Val Kilmer vehicle), Dudley Simpson's *Blake's*



Seven, Laurie Johnson's *The Avengers*, Dennis McCarthy's *V: The Series* and John Debney's *SeaQuest DSV* come off best.

As for **Space and Beyond** (Silva Screen SSD 1065, disc one: 19 tracks, 74:41, disc two: 19 tracks, 64:14), if that title sounds familiar, you might expect to find some of Shirley Walker's tremendous scoring of Fox's defunct *Space: Above and Beyond* show within this 2CD set, particularly since the graphic look of the packaging is designed to reflect that series. But apparently some kind of scheduling snafu postponed the recording of any of Walker's music until the next album in this series, leaving *Space and Beyond* as a cross between Telarc's 30th Anniversary *Star Trek* CD (complete with sound effects) and a slightly more interesting than usual sci-fi compilation, with suites and themes from Horner's *Apollo 13* and *Cocoon*, Bill Conti's *The Right Stuff*, Barry's *The Black Hole*, Henry Mancini's *LifeForce*, Bernstein's *Heavy Metal*, Maurice Jarre's *Enemy Mine*, Williams's *Close Encounters* and *Empire Strikes Back*, etc.

Although much of the material is hard to find, there isn't all that much that's not available on CD, and Nic Raine's take on some of these pieces (particularly *Enemy Mine* and *Heavy Metal*) is so far removed from the original versions that they're hardly a substitute for the real thing. One of the exceptions is Raine's take on *The Black Hole*, John Barry's peculiar but sometimes majestic space-opera score: Raine's long association with the composer gives him a leg up on treatments of Barry's music (as his two Barry compilations for Silva demonstrate), and since this score has never been available on CD, the lengthy, well-played suite is almost welcome. Unfortunately, it focuses on not one but two renditions of Barry's faux-*Star Wars* march for the movie, which to me is just this side of laughable given Disney's horrendous attempt to glom onto some of Lucasfilm's box-office magic. On the commercially unreleased-music side, a definite highlight is Chris Young's end title music for *Species*, a hypnotic, well-performed piece that unfortunately chooses as its inspiration the Aquarium music from Saint-Saens's "Carnival of the Animals," which has almost overtaken Orff's

"O Fortuna!" as the most over-referenced classical piece in film and television music.

Cinema Choral Classics (SILKD 6015, 14 tracks, 71:33) at least offers a coherent selection of music dominated by choir (in this case the Crouch End Festival Chorus). Typically, the more agitated and energetic the music, the less convincingly it comes across: the mind-numbingly over-invoked "O Fortuna!" from *Carmina Burana*, Jerry Goldsmith's furious "Never Surrender" ("Arthur's Farewell" on the original *First Knight* album), Basil Poledouris's "Riders of Doom" from *Conan the Barbarian*, for example. However, Miklós Rózsa's gorgeous setting of "The Lord's Prayer" from *King of Kings*, Barry's just-a-little-bit-on-the-pretentious-side employment of a choral take on Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings for *The Scarlet Letter* and an all-too-brief suite of his wonderful score for *The Lion in Winter* sound just fine. The exception that proves the rule is a well-done take on Goldsmith's Oscar-winning music from *The Omen*.

Another nice inclusion is Maurice Jarre's beautiful opening to the miniseries *Jesus of Nazareth*, sporting one of the composer's most memorable themes. Ennio Morricone's admittedly lovely music to Roland Joffé's *The Mission* has always suffered in my view from its unfortunate connection to the abysmal film for which it was written, one of the first and most ham-handed shots in the Hollywood PC-onslaught that was wildly overpraised at the time of its release (and it's no surprise that the geniuses behind *The Mission* eventually revealed their true stripes with the bathetic *The Scarlet Letter*). Rounding out the album is Mario Nascimbene's dreamily goofy theme for *The Vikings* (which my wife pointed out sounds just like the music to the old commercials for the Slinky toy), and Patrick Doyle's "Non Nobis Domine" from *Henry V*.

This year's typically endless Academy Awards ceremony was rendered somewhat less annoying by the heavy presence of independents in the running. Although it was tiresome watching almost every award go to the beautifully made but just-a-tad-boring period epic *The English Patient*, it was worth it to see the Coen brothers and Frances McDormand accepting statuettes for *Fargo*, and Billy Bob Thornton picking up a screenwriting Oscar for *Sling Blade*: these were the two best and most original movies I saw last year.

The coolest moment was watching Rachel Portman become the first woman to win an Oscar for writing a movie score. I had written off this Best Comedy or Musical Score category as the annual Alan Menken Award, but Portman's win for *Emma* was a welcome and complete surprise (although given the Academy's "Period Film = Quality" stance, maybe it shouldn't have been).

Gabriel Yared's win for *The English Patient* was an inevitability, however, and while it's a highly effective work in the film and sometimes quite beautiful, it's not the most memorable movie music I heard last year... but maybe that's because

commercial film genres are now apparently only allowed to be nominated for technical awards like sound-effects editing and visual effects. The most effective score of 1996 was Danny Elfman's music to *Mission: Impossible*. When was the last time an action score got nominated for an Oscar? [*The Fugitive*, 1993. -LK] There was a time when scores like Philippe Sarde's *Tess* (the kind of high-profile period piece preferred by Academy voters) could share the spotlight with commercial action works like Goldsmith's *The Boys from Brazil* or Williams's *Superman*. Even horror and suspense scores like *Jaws* and *The Omen* could actually win Oscars.

A good case in point was Jerry Goldsmith's *The Ghost and the Darkness*, a musical work that rose handsomely above its monster-movie origins... I have to wonder whether Goldsmith's imaginative use of sound in his score didn't contribute to the movie's Oscar win for Sound Effects Editing. And Carter Burwell's *Fargo* surely deserved at least a nomination—maybe voters couldn't figure out which arbitrary category to put it in.

The Oscar show's producers continue to demonstrate their belief that attendees and television audiences will eagerly sit still for anything as long as it has nothing to do with movies or movie-making. Apart from the usual song-and-dance production numbers (relics of the bygone movie musicals that are only made in cartoon form these days), the nadir of this philosophy was a salute to film editing in which montages of famous film scenes were obscured by a hoofing troupe of Irish River Dancers. Feel free to make your own associations. By far the biggest waste of the show's eons-long running time was the performances of Oscar-nominated songs from such cinematic classics as *One Fine Day* (the worst Oscar-nominated film since *The Towering Inferno*), *The Mirror Has Two Faces*, *Evita* and *Up Close and Personal*. Is it a coincidence that none of these movies (with the exception of *Evita*'s nominations for art direction and costuming) were seen fit to receive any nominations save for their hit songs?

Although I have no great love for Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Evita*, I'll at least grant it that its Oscar-winning song, "You Must Love Me," was actually sung in the film before the final credits rolled, and thus was the most deserving (if not the most pleasant to listen to) of any song in this category. But since it was written specifically for the movie (and expressly for the purpose, it can be assumed, of giving Webber a shot at the Oscar), you can hardly say that it was integral to the opera's story.

It's probably too much to ask that movie studios stop littering their film's end credits with soundtrack-album-padding songs, but do we have to pretend that these are integral parts of the movies and thus deserving of awards? It's like giving Emmy awards to the commercials that play during television shows; we might as well start giving out Academy Awards for Best Product Placement. •

Look for Jeff Bond's column, "The Bond Market Report," in Sci-Fi Universe magazine.

Fahrenheit 451 Dept.

Volume One, 1993-96

Issues are 24 pages unless noted; most 1993 editions are now xeroxes only.

#30/31, February/March 1993, 64 pages

Maurice Jarre, Basil Poledouris, Jay Chataway, John Scott, Chris Young, Mike Lang; the secondary market, Ennio Morricone albums, Elmer Bernstein Film Music Collection LPs; 1992 in review.

#32, April 1993, 16 pages

Temp-tracking Matinee, SPFM '93 Conference, Star Trek editorial.

#33, May 1993, 12 pages

Book reviews, articles on classical/film connection.

#34, June 1993, 16 pages

Goldsmith dinner report; orchestrators & what they do, Lost in Space, recycled Herrmann; review spotlights on Christopher Young, Pinocchio, Bruce Lee film scores.

#35, July 1993, 16 pages

Tribute to David Kraft; John Beal Part 1; scores vs. songs, Herrmann Christmas operas; Film Composers Dictionary.

#36/37, August/September 1993, 40 pages

Elmer Bernstein, Bob Townsend (Varèse), Richard Kraft and Nick Redman Part 1, John Beal Part 2; reviews of CAM CDs; collector interest articles, classic corner, fantasy film scores of Elmer Bernstein.

#38, Oct. 1993, 16 pages

John Debney (seaQuest DSV), Richard Kraft and Nick Redman Part 2.

#39, Nov. 1993, 16 pages

Richard Kraft and Nick Redman Part 3, Fox CDs, Nightmare Before Christmas and Bride of Frankenstein review spotlights.

#40, Dec. 1993, 16 pages

Richard Kraft and Nick Redman 4; Re-recording The Magnificent Seven for Koch.

#41/42/43, Jan./Feb./March 1994, 48 pages

Elliot Goldenthal, James Newton Howard, Kitaro and Randy Miller (Heaven & Earth), Rachel Portman, Ken Darby; Star Wars trivia/cue sheets; sexy album covers; westerns; 1993 in review.

#44, April 1994

Joel McNeely, Basil Poledouris (On Deadly Ground); SPFM Morricone tribute report and photos; lots of reviews.

#45, May 1994

Randy Newman (*Maverick*), Graeme Revell (*The Crow*); Goldsmith in concert; in-depth reviews: The Magnificent Seven and Schindler's List; Instant Liner Notes, book reviews.

#46/47, June/July 1994

Patrick Doyle, James Newton Howard (*Wyatt Earp*), John Morgan (restoring Hans Salter). Tribute to Henry Mancini; overview: Michael Nyman scores, collectible CDs.

#48, August 1994

Mark Mancina (*Speed*); Chuck Cirino & Peter Rotter; Richard Kraft: advice for aspiring film composers; classical music in films; new CAM CDs, Cinerama LPs; bestselling soundtrack CDs.

#49, September 1994

Hans Zimmer (*The Lion King*), Shirley Walker; Laurence Rosenthal on the Vineyard; Hans Salter in memoriam; classical music in films; John Williams in concert; Recordman at the flea market.

#50, October 1994

Alan Silvestri (*Forrest Gump*), Mark Isham; sex and soundtrack sales; Lalo Schifrin in concert; Ennio Morricone Beat CDs; that wacky Internet; Recordman on liner notes.

#51, November 1994

Howard Shore (*Ed Wood*), Thomas Newman (*Shawshank Redemption*), J.

Peter Robinson (Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*), Lukas's mom; music of Heimat, Star Trek; promos.

#52, December 1994

Eric Serra, Marc Shaiman Part 1, Sandy De Crescent (music contractor), Valencia Film Music Conference, SPFM Conference Part 1, StarGate liner notes, Shostakoholics Anonymous.

#53/54, January/February 1995

Marc Shaiman Part 2, Dennis McCarthy (*Star Trek*); Sergio Bassetti, Jean-Claude Petit and Armando Trovajoli in Valencia; Music and the Academy Awards Part 1; rumored LPs, quadraphonic LPs.

#55/56, March/April 1995

Basil Poledouris (*The Jungle Book*), Alan Silvestri (*The Quick and the Dead*), Joe LoDuca (*Evil Dead*), Oscar and Music Part 2, Recordman's Diary, SPFM Con Report Part 2.

#57, May 1995

Jerry Goldsmith in concert, Bruce Broughton on Young Sherlock Holmes, Miles Goodman interviewed, 1994 Readers Poll, Star Trek.

#58, June 1995

Michael Kamen (*Die Hard*), Royal S. Brown (film music critic), Recordman Loves Annette, History of Soundtrack Collecting Part 1.

#59/60, July/Aug. 1995, 48 pp.

Sex Sells Too (sexy LP covers, lots of photos), Maurice Jarre interviewed, Miklós Rózsa Remembered, History of Soundtrack Collecting Part 2, film music in concert pro and con.

#61, September 1995

Elliot Goldenthal (*Batman Forever*), Michael Kamen Part 2, Chris Lennertz (new composer), Star Trek: The Motion Picture (analysis), classical music for soundtrack fans.

#62, October 1995

Danny Elfman Part 1, John Ottman (*The Usual Suspects*), Robert Townson (Varèse Sarabande), Top Ten Most Influential Scores, Goldsmith documentary reviewed.

#63, November 1995

James Bond Issue! John Barry and James Bond (history/overview), Eric Serra on *GoldenEye*, essay, favorites, more. Also: History of Collecting 3, Davy Crockett LPs.

#64, December 1995

Danny Elfman Part 2 (big!), Steve Bartels (orchestrator), Recordman Meets Shaft: The Blaxploitation Soundtracks, Michael Kamen Part 3, re-recording *House of Frankenstein*.

#65/66/67, January/February/March 1996, 48 pages

Thomas Newman, Toru Takemitsu, Robotech, Star Trek, Ten Influential Composers; Philip Glass, Heitor Villa-Lobos, songs in film, best of

'95, film music documentary reviews (Herrmann, Delerue, Takemitsu, "Hollywood Sound").

#68, April 1996

David Shire's *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three*; Carter Burwell (*Fargo*), gag obituaries, Apollo 13 promo/bootleg tips.

#69, May 1996

Music in *Plan 9 from Outer Space*; John Walsh's funny movie music glossary; Herrmann and Rózsa radio programs; Irwin Allen box set review; John Bender's "Into the Dark Pool" column.

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Mark Mancina (*Twister*), final desert island movie lists, Jeff Bond's summer movie column, TV's Biggest Hits book review.

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David Arnold (*Independence Day*), Michel Colombier, Recordman Goes to Congress, Jeff Bond's summer movie column.

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Ten Best Scores of '90s, Thomas Newman's *The Player*, *Escape from L.A.*, conductor John Mauceri, reference books, Akira Ifukube CDs.

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Recordman on War Film Soundtracks part 1; Interview: David Schecter: Monstrous Movie Music; Akira Ifukube CDs part 2, Miles Goodman obituary.

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Action Scores in the '90s (big intelligent article); Cine-music '96 report (John Barry, Zhou Jiping); Vic Mizzy interviewed.

#75, November 1996

John Barry: Cinemusic Interview (very big); Recordman on war film soundtracks part 2, Jeff Bond's review column.

#76, December 1996

Interviews: Randy Edelman, John Barry part 2, Ry Cooder (*Last Man Standing*); Andy Durst's laserdisc column, Lukas's review column.

Vol. 2, No. 1, Jan./Feb. 1997

First in new format! Star Wars issue: John Williams interview, behind the Special Edition CDs, commentary, cue minutiae/trivia, more. Also: Jeff Bond reviews.

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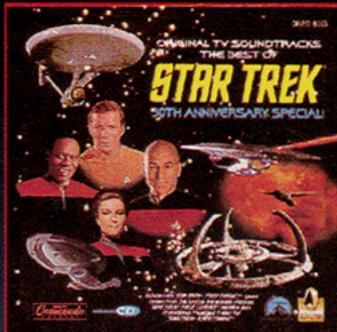
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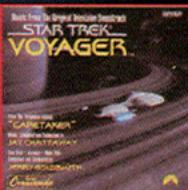
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